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ABSTRACT

This book of 41 lesson plans, compiled from resources in the ERIC database, focuses on strategies for teaching the novel at the junior high and high school level. Each lesson includes a brief description, objectives, and procedures. The book includes strategies for teaching specific novels, general strategies, a user's guide, an activities chart, and an annotated bibliography of related resources in the ERIC database. (MS)

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Teaching the Novel

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Teaching Resources in the ERIC Database

TRIED

by Becky Alano

edited by Mary Morgan

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Teaching the Novel

Becky Alano

edited by Mary Morgan

ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills

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ERIC (an acronym for Educational Resources Information Center) is a national network of 16 clearinghouses, each of which is responsible for building the ERIC database by identifying and abstracting various educational resources, including research reports, curriculum guides, conference papers, journal articles, and government reports. The Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills (ERIC/RCS) collects educational information specifically related to reading, English, journalism, speech, and theater at all levels. We also cover interdisciplinary areas, such as media studies, reading and writing technology, mass communication, language arts, critical thinking, literature, and many aspects of literacy.

TRIED is an acronym for Teaching Resources in the ERIC Database.

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Series Introduction

Dear Teacher,

In this age of the information explosion, we can easily feel overwhelmed by the enormity of material available to us. This is certainly true in the education field. Theories and techniques (both new and recycled) compete for our attention daily. Yet the information piling up on our desks and in our minds is often useless precisely because of its enormous volume—how do we begin to sort out the bits and pieces that are interesting and useful for us?

The TRIED series can help. This series of teaching resources taps the rich collection of instructional techniques collected in the ERIC database. Focusing on specific topics and grade levels, these lesson outlines have been condensed and reorganized from their original sources to offer you a wide but manageable range of practical teaching suggestions, useful ideas, and classroom techniques. We encourage you to refer to the sources in the ERIC database for more comprehensive presentations of the material outlined here.

Besides its role in developing the ERIC database, ERIC/RCS is responsible for synthesizing and analyzing selected information from the database and making it available in printed form. To this end we have developed the TRIED series. The name TRIED reflects the fact that these ideas have been tried by other teachers and are here shared with you for your consideration. We hope that these teaching supplements will also serve for you as a guide, introduction, or reacquaintance to the ERIC system, and to the wealth of material available in this information age.

Carl B. Smith, Director

ERIC/RCS

User's Guide for "Teaching the Novel" TRIED

These lessons offer practical suggestions for teaching novels to young adults. The book is divided into two sections: the first section contains lessons on individual novels frequently read and studied at the junior high and high school level, ranging from *The Color Purple* to *The Red Badge of Courage*. The second section provides lesson ideas of a more general nature that can be used with most novels. An "Activities Chart" (pages vi-vii) indicates the types of activities (such as group work, journal writing, role-playing, etc.) found in the various lessons. An annotated bibliography at the end of the book contains references to additional lessons as well as to resources for developing a comprehensive literature program.

Lesson Design

These lessons offer practical ideas that have been gathered from their original source in the ERIC database and revised into a consistent format for your convenience. Each lesson includes the following sections:

Brief Description

Objectives

Procedures

Although the lessons are addressed to you, the teacher, many times the TRIED text addresses the students directly. These student directions are indicated with a "•" (bullet). Address these remarks to your students throughout the lesson, if you so choose.

You know your students better than anyone else. Adapt these lessons to the ability levels represented in your classroom. Some of the lessons were specifically written for certain levels, but can be modified easily.

Consider these lessons as recommendations from your colleagues who TRIED them and found that they worked well. Try them yourself, modify them, and trust your students to respond with enthusiasm. Students can learn the material better if they use a variety of ways to explore the meaning of the facts and ideas they are studying.

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Activities Chart

	Group Activities	Journal Writing	Writing Prompts	Discussion Questions	Role-Playing	Comp. Literature	Writing Exercises	Art Projects	Character Analysis	Creative Writing	Prereading	Dramatics	Research	Critical Thinking	Critical Reading
Diary of Anne Frank 1 (p. 2)	X	X	X	X			X				X			X	
Diary of Anne Frank 2 (p. 5)			X	X											
The Bell Jar (p. 9)			X	X		X			X						
Catcher in the Rye (p. 11)			X	X		X									
The Chocolate War (p. 13)			X	X		X									
The Color Purple (p. 15)			X	X		X	X							X	
Dandelion Wine 1 (p. 17)								X							
Dandelion Wine 2 (p. 18)	X								X		X			X	
The Grapes of Wrath (p. 20)			X												X
Great Expectations (p. 22)					X						X				
The Great Gatsby (p. 24)			X	X		X			X						
The Hobbit (p. 26)				X											
Huckleberry Finn 1 (p. 28)			X	X					X						
My Antonia (p. 31)		X	X												
Lord of the Flies (p. 32)	X				X									X	
Lord & Heart (p. 34)				X		X				X				X	X
A Member/Wedding (p. 37)			X	X		X									
Of Mice and Men (p. 39)	X		X	X											
Huckleberry Finn 2 (p. 41)			X												
Red Badge/Courage 1 (p. 42)			X												

Activities Chart (continued)

	Group Activities	Journal Writing	Writing Prompts	Discussion Questions	Role-Playing	Comp. Literature	Writing Exercises	Art Projects	Character Analysis	Creative Writing	Prereading	Dramatics	Research	Critical Thinking	Critical Reading
1984 (p. 43)			X												
The Pigman (p. 44)	X		X	X											
Separate Peace, et al. (p. 46)			X							X					
Red Badge/Courage 2 (p. 47)			X	X		X					X				
The Red Pony (p. 49)			X	X		X									
The Scarlet Letter 1 (p. 51)	X		X	X					X		X	X			
The Scarlet Letter 2 (p. 53)			X												
A Separate Peace (p. 54)	X		X	X							X				
Kill a Mockingbird 1 (p. 57)	X				X	X					X		X		
Kill a Mockingbird 2 (p. 60)				X							X				
Ordinary People (p. 62)			X	X		X									
Dear Abby (p. 65)					X				X						
Sexual Stereotypes (p. 66)	X			X										X	
Alt. /Book Report (p. 69)			X							X					
Writing/Literature (p. 71)										X					
Poetry & Songs (p. 73)											X	X			
Literary Devices (p. 74)			X	X											X
Readers' Theater (p. 77)	X		X									X			
Reader Response (p. 80)		X	X				X								X
Romance (p. 82)	X	X		X										X	X

Strategies for Teaching Specific Novels

Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl

Decision-Making and Writing Activities

Source

ED 232 147

"*Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl.*" In Allen, Barbara, and others, *Decision Making Activities for the Grade 9 English Curriculum*, pp. 15-18 in EDRS. Summer Curriculum Project No. 023, 1982, Wrappingers Central School District 1, Wrappingers Falls, NY

Brief Description

After reading *Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl,* students examine Anne's choices and decisions, and make decisions about what is important. Includes an introductory journal-writing activity, a class discussion, a group activity, and several writing activities.

Objective

To strengthen students' decision-making and writing skills.

Procedures

Introductory Journal-Writing Activity

Before students read *Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl,* read the following paragraph:

- You are at home with your family when you hear the air-raid sirens. You have to leave your home immediately for an indefinite period of time. Because of limited space in the underground shelter, you may bring only those possessions that will fit into two grocery shopping bags. Make a realistic list of what you will bring with you. Remember two things: you may never see your home again, and everything you bring must fit into the two bags.

Give students 5-10 minutes to record their lists in their journals. Once they are finished, encourage students to share the items on their lists with the class and to explain why they brought the items they chose (out of necessity, for sentimental reasons, etc.).

- Compare the number of items you brought out of necessity to those chosen for sentimental reasons.
- As a homework assignment, gather the items on your list and put them into two grocery bags. During the next class period, you will report whether your grocery bags were full, overflowing, or underloaded. Also report whether you decided to exchange any items in your bags for something you forgot, or if you discovered more items that you could not live without.

Class Discussion

Begin the discussion with the following questions to establish what Anne's life in the Secret Annex was like:

- What were the rules/regulations the families had to follow? Why were the rules so strict?
- According to Anne, what were the good things about living in the Annex?
- What problems does she continually write about in her diary? (Most of the problems involve the other inhabitants.) Establish the decisions Anne made which helped to reduce the number of conflicts in the Secret Annex, and examine the effects of these decisions on her life.
- What are Anne's options to resolve the conflicts she experiences with others? (Stay in the situation and continue fighting? Run from the situation and leave the Annex? Seek alternative solutions by working with others to improve relationships?)
- What are the possible consequences/risks of each alternative?
- Which alternative does she choose? Why?
- How does her new behavior affect other people?
- How do their reactions affect Anne?
- How does Anne deal with her depressions/despondency in Entry 1, March 1944?

Select a student to summarize the changes that have taken place in Anne's problem-solving techniques. The student might state any of the following changes:

She now takes responsibility for the situation that is causing her distress.

She takes control of her life and tries to change her behavior to affect the desired results.

She decides to be positive instead of negative (looks for good in people, thinks about nature and beauty in the world).

As a final discussion activity, read the students the following optimist/pessimist attitude question:

- Pretend that the war situation, the Annex, the stiff rules, the personality conflicts inside the Annex are all represented by a glass with sand in it. Anne Frank looks at the glass as if she's looking at her life inside the Annex. Would the glass be half-filled or half-empty for Anne? What's the difference?
- If you can't change the circumstances you find yourself in (Anne couldn't change world history: she was Jewish and had to escape from the people who were rounding up and killing Jews), what *can* you do to make your life more bearable?

Group Activity

Divide the class into six small groups. Each group is responsible for discussing one of the three following characters assigned to it: Mr. Frank, Mr. Van Daan, or Miep. Thus, each character will be discussed by two groups.

- Discuss the following questions as they apply to your assigned character. Select one person in your group to write down the group's responses.

1. What is most important to the character as a person?
2. What decisions does the character make?
3. How do the character's beliefs affect those decisions?
4. What risks are involved in those decisions?
5. What are the consequences of those decisions?

- Get together with the other group who is working on the same character. Share, discuss, and revise your responses.
- Select a few people from your combined group to report your responses to the whole class.

Writing Activities

- Write an essay describing Mr. Van Daan's attitudes and beliefs toward life. How would his attitudes have caused him to make different decisions than Mr. Frank made? How would Annex life have been different as a result of Mr. Van Daan's decisions?
- Pretend you are either Miep, Mr. Frank, or Mr. Van Daan, and choose a major decision made by this person in the *Diary*. Write a composition persuading the other inhabitants of the Annex to accept your decision. Describe the situation forcing you to make a decision, two or three alternatives you see as solutions, and two reasons for choosing a particular solution. Your audience will be the person or persons who will be most affected by your decision.
- Mr. Frank tells Anne that all children must assume responsibility for their destinies and that parents can only give good advice or guide them along the right paths. In a composition, discuss what decisions Anne made about her future while living in the Annex. In what way does she live her life now that supports her ambitions for the future? How is she presently helping herself to achieve the goals she wants later in life?

Anne Frank: Diary of a Young Girl

A Set of Detailed Questions

Brief Description

Presents a comprehensive set of questions for *Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl.* In the source, answers to the questions are included.

Objective

To help students learn to read for a purpose as well as for enjoyment.

Procedures

- Answer the following questions in complete sentences. Each answer should rephrase the question as a statement and should begin with a noun rather than a pronoun whenever possible.

Source:

ED 264 521

Levinski, Carol, and others. *A Look at Books. Demonstration Program in Reading, Santa Fe Middle School. Teacher to Teacher,* 1983. pp. 4-8, pp. 46-49.

Preface—Introduction

1. Under what circumstances were the members of the Secret Annex finally discovered?
2. How was it that Anne's diary was not destroyed?
3. Why does Anne's diary symbolize "the triumph of the human spirit?"
4. In the introduction, Eleanor Roosevelt was quoted as saying, "War's greatest evil is the degradation of the human spirit." In your own words, tell what you think this statement means.

14 June—5 July 1942

1. What reasons did Anne give for writing a diary? What does this saying mean: "Paper is more patient than Man"?
2. In reference to Jews, Anne said, "Our freedom was strictly limited. Yet things were still bearable." What did she mean by those statements? Give examples.
3. Why had the Franks been preparing to go into hiding?

8 July—29 October 1942

1. How did Anne react when she learned of the call-up notice? How did the others react?
2. Why did the wearing of the yellow Star of David make a difference to other people?
3. What did Anne say was the most oppressive fact about the Annex?
4. How did Anne describe each member of the Van Daan family? How did the Van Daans compare with the Franks—likes and dislikes, attitudes, feelings for each other, handling of family problems?
5. What changes were beginning to take place in Anne's feelings about herself? What caused these changes?

7 November—17 November 1942

1. On 7 November 1941, Anne described a situation which caused her to feel hurt. Do you think she had a legitimate complaint? Why do you think Anne was so critical of her mother? Would you agree that her mother was a poor example?
2. Where are Tunis, Algiers, Casablanca and Oran? What do you think Churchill's statement on 9 November 1942 meant?
3. On what basis did the group decide to take in an eighth person? Why was Dussel chosen?

19 November 1942—18 May 1943

1. Anne's moods seem to be getting more depressed. What were some of her problems at this point?
2. From time to time, there were events which caused much fear in the group. Give an example of one of these occurrences. Why were these incidents so frightening?
3. What kinds of new activities were added to keep the group busy? Were they effective?

13 June—9 August 1943

1. What does Anne's birthday poem tell us about her parents? Did they really not understand her, as she suggested? What reasons did Mr. Frank offer for disciplining her? In the last few lines, how did Mr. Frank describe Anne?

2. Compare Anne's fourteenth birthday party with the party at the beginning of the book. What was different about the two parties, and why?

3. On 29 July 1943, Anne described a scene that depicts her as innocently causing a row with Mrs. Van Daan and Dussel. Make a note of some of the statements Anne made which could be called sarcastic. How would you define a sarcasm? Why is sarcasm often brutal but funny? What is the meaning of the P.S.?

10 August 1943—7 January 1944

1. Through Anne's writing we can become quite familiar with her moods. What were some of the thoughts and scenes she chose to write about that indicate her severe depression at this time?

2. At what point do we see that Anne was coming out of her depression? Why did she think she had been depressed? What kinds of thoughts did she express that helped her to overcome the depression? Do you think her depression was natural or not?

3. From 29 December 1943, we begin to see a more mature Anne. What kinds of changes were taking place in Anne that indicated she was no longer a child, but a young adult?

4. What was Anne's rationale for deciding to talk to Peter? Why did she prefer him to Margot, her sister? How did this new relationship emphasize the growth in Anne?

12 January—16 February 1944

1. What diversions had Anne invented to pass the time and improve herself? Were they working?

2. How did Anne feel that Margot had changed toward her?

3. Anne described various efforts she had made to become closer to her mother. What were some of these? If you were she, what might you have done?

4. Do you think Anne would be as attracted to Peter if their circumstances were different? Why was this friendship unusually important to both Peter and Anne?

19 February—19 March 1944

1. How had Peter made Anne's life more interesting?

2. On 3 March 1944, Anne described her main objectives with Peter. What were they? Do you think these are the basis for a

truly loving relationship? Are these objectives typical of teenagers?

3. How did Anne see herself now in contrast to two years before?
4. Contrast Mrs. Frank's philosophy on misery and Anne's. Which do you agree with?

19 March—25 April 1944

1. What does Margot's letter tell us about her feelings? Did this disprove any of Anne's notions about her sister?
2. How would you say that Anne reacted to her sister's letter? Was she jealous, understanding, selfish, provocative, or what?
3. How did the parents of Peter and Anne begin to view their friendship?

26 April 1944 —Epilogue

1. On 28 April 1944, Anne asked some questions about war, peace, and destruction. Could we ask the same questions today? Compare the current world situation with the time of Anne's diary. What are the similarities and differences?
2. Anne said the little man is as guilty as the politicians for the war. Otherwise people of the world would rise up in revolt. In what ways can the little man express his dislike of a government's policies? Give examples of methods used in this country to demonstrate political disapproval.
3. Why is it unfair to belittle a group of people on the basis of their race, religion or nationality?
4. Is it possible to achieve freedom, truth, and right when people are prejudiced against each other? How can people overcome their personal prejudices against their fellow human beings?
5. How does the above question relate to the statement: "All children must look after their own upbringing"?

The Bell Jar

Exploring Student Response

Brief Description

Presents several ideas for discussion/writing topics on Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar*. Provides suggestions for connecting this novel with other literary works.

Objective

To examine the novel and link it with students' personal experiences.

Procedure

Discussion and Writing Ideas

- Write about a time when you needed others. How did you reach out? What was the response of other people? Was the response what you expected?
- Imagine that you are a friend of Esther's when she returns home to Boston. What do you notice about her (her clothes, handwriting, etc.)? What could you do to help her? What would you tell her?
- Write a report on Esther, as Dr. Nolan might, for the hospital committee. Be as specific as possible. Do you think she is ready to go home? What is your prognosis for her future?
- Write a description of Esther ten years after the novel ends. What is she doing, and what is she like? When she thinks back on these months in New York and Boston, what will she say she has learned? What would she say now about her relationship with her mother, with Buddy, with Dr. Nolan?
- Discuss Esther's work as a hospital volunteer. What is the point in this scene?
- What is the import of Esther breaking her leg while skiing with Buddy?
- Analyze the roles of women in *The Bell Jar*. What are the limitations and restrictions of their roles? What can they do, and what can they *not* do? What do each of the following women represent: Doreen, Jay Cee, Dodo Conway? Which role, if any, do you prefer?

Source

ED 306 584

Peck, David. *Novels of Initiation: A Guidebook for Teaching Literature to Adolescents.* Teachers College Press, NY, 1989. pp. 63-65.

- Analyze the role of men in *The Bell Jar*. What are the restrictions and limitations to their roles? What are their relations with women like? What does each of the following men seem to represent: Buddy, Constantin, Lenny, Marco? Is there any pattern to Esther's relations with, and attitudes toward, men? Explain.
- Compare *The Bell Jar* to *The Catcher in the Rye*. How are Esther and Holden similar? How are they different?
- Analyze the figurative language in *The Bell Jar*. What characterizes Plath's use of images and symbols (the bell jar, babies, fig tree, etc.)?
- Analyze the humor in *The Bell Jar*. What is it like, and how does it work? Find one short scene and write about what makes it funny (the magazine luncheon, for example).

Connections to Other Works

1. Carson McCullers, *The Heart Is a Lonely Hunter* and *Member of the Wedding*, chapter 9. Both novels contain female protagonists in search of identity.
2. J. D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye,* chapter 1. A number of parallels exist between these two novels, particularly in their New York settings and their 1950s vocabulary and atmosphere.
3. Ken Kesey, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest*. Chief Broom's narration of this novel echoes Esther's hospital experiences.
4. Judith Guest, *Ordinary People,* chapter 4. Compare the interior monologues of Esther Greenwood and Conrad Jarrett, as they both view their worlds through distorted lenses.

Comments/Notes:

The Catcher in the Rye

Discussion and Writing Topics

Brief Description

Presents several ideas for discussion/writing topics on J. D. Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*. Provides suggestions for connecting this novel with other literary works.

Source

ED 306 584

Peck, David. *Novels of Initiation: A Guidebook for Teaching Literature to Adolescents.* Teachers College Press, NY, 1989. pp. 11-13.

Objective

To examine the novel and link it with students' personal experiences.

Procedure

Discussion and Writing Ideas

- Write a list of your own most important values. Compare it to the list of Holden's values you have compiled in your journal. How do you differ from Holden? Describe three of his ideals of attitudes that you do not share.
- Describe an experience in which you felt yourself to be an "outsider" like Holden. Why did you feel outside? What finally changed your situation? What did you learn from the experience, if anything?
- Describe a situation in which you were not completely truthful to yourself. What was the reason? What was the outcome? Do you find any parallels to how Holden omits or changes the truth in his narration?
- The novel takes place in the late 1940s. How and where could it be taking place today? How would the story be different in a contemporary setting?
- Find a paragraph in the novel in which Holden writes about "phonies" or about absurd events or adults. Comment on it, drawing on your own experiences. What are "phonies" today? In your own language, describe this behavior that Holden constantly complains of. Are we all "phonies" sometimes? How?
- Find a paragraph you like in the novel and translate it into today's slang.
- *The Catcher in the Rye* has been described as a typical "quest" novel (a romance in which the hero experiences trials and tests but is ultimately successful in the search). Describe

a quest you have had, including the test and the final outcome.

- Where is Holden today? What is he doing?
- Write Holden a letter in the hospital as though you were D. B. or Phoebe.
- You are Holden's psychiatrist: write a final report releasing him from the hospital and giving a prognosis for his future.
- How would you characterize the adults in the novel? Why do they keep telling Holden about rules? (Notice that Holden admires people—Jane Gallagher, Richard Kinsella—who violate the rules.)
- What is the significance of the novel's title? How does it describe Holden's relations with children throughout the novel?

Connections to Other Novels

1. Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, chapter 2. Compare themes, points of view, character, structure, humor, and language in the two novels. How do Huck and Holden have similar relationships to their respective societies? In what ways are Huck and Holden both heroes?

2. F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Great Gatsby*, chapter 6. Refer to Holden's comments on this novel and then compare Gatsby and Holden and the themes in the two novels (innocence/experience, appearance/reality, materialism, etc.).

3. John Knowles, *A Separate Peace*. Note the parallels in setting (a boys' school) and characters.

4. Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*, chapter 5. How do Ester Greenwood's experiences parallel those of Holden?

5. Judith Guest, *Ordinary People,* chapter 4. Compare Holden Caulfield and Conrad Jarrett on questions of family, love, loss, etc.

The Chocolate War

Relating Literature to Student Experiences

Brief Description

Presents several ideas for discussion/writing topics on Robert Cormier's *The Chocolate War*. Provides suggestions for connecting this novel with other literary works.

Source

ED 306 584

Peck, David. *Novels of Initiation: A Guidebook for Teaching Literature to Adolescents.* Teachers College Press, NY, 1989. pp. 39-41.

Objective

To examine the novel and link it with students' personal experiences.

Procedure

Discussion and Writing Ideas

- How did you feel when you finished reading *The Chocolate War*? Why?
- Write another short chapter: What will Jerry do now? Then read Cormier's sequel, *Beyond the Chocolate War*.
- What would Jerry be like if he were at your school? Is there some activity or rule he might rebel against? What do you think would happen in the struggle?
- Describe an incident you know of in which someone went against the rules of a school or other institution. What were the consequences? (Recently, a girl in California sued her school for its couples-only prom rule. She won, went to the dance, and had a good time.)
- What principles does Jerry represent or stand up for? Are they important? Could he somehow modify his idealism a little?
- Describe a personal experience in which you went against the wishes of the group. What were the consequences of your action? How did you feel?
- How important is setting in this novel? Could *The Chocolate War* have been set in any other environment and been as effective? Where?
- What is the relationship of Jerry to Goober? (Consider chapter 23 in particular.) Is Jerry a good friend to Goober? Why or why not?
- What is the meaning of Jerry's poster?

The Chocolate War would fit neatly into a thematic unit on "The Individual and Society." The source lists several short stories that blend well with this novel in such a unit.

Shirley Jackson, "The Lottery." Compare the black boxes, the rituals, the violence, and the conformity.

Herman Melville, "Bartleby the Scrivener." Compare the protests in the two works.

John Updike, "A & P." Compare heroes and initiations.

- Is Jerry a hero? Make a case for or against this notion.
- You are brought in as the new headmaster at Trinity: what changes would you begin in order to make it a school where students would not feel such fear and intimidation?

Connections to Other Works

Poems

1. T.S. Eliot, "The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock." Discuss the poem in terms of Jerry's poster and the actions of the novel.
2. Robert Frost, "The Road Not Taken," "Stopping by Woods on a Snowy Evening." These are poems about personal choices.

Essays

Henry David Thoreau, *Walden* and "Civil Disobedience." Compare the ideas of a different drummer and a majority of one.

Novels

1. Robert Cormier, *Beyond the Chocolate War.* Note what happens to Cormier's characters in this sequel.
2. William Golding, *Lord of the Flies.* Compare violence, gangs, and rituals.
3. Judith Guest, *Ordinary People*, chapter 4. Compare the two protagonists and the ideas of death, friendship, and emergent sexuality.
4. Ken Kesey, *One Flew over the Cuckoo's Nest.* Compare in terms of the heroes and the theme of fighting the bureaucracy.
5. John Knowles, *A Separate Peace*, chapter 1. Compare setting, character, and themes.
6. J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*, chapter 1. Compare the struggles of these two protagonists against their respective societies.
7. Mark Twain, *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, chapter 2. Compare the two heroes, the conflict between principles and social rules, and the issue of conformity.

The Color Purple

Examining Narrative Techniques

Brief Description

Presents an approach to Alice Walker's *The Color Purple* in which students analyze their responses to the novel, explore the novel's themes, and examine Walker's narrative techniques.

Objective

To combine the study of literary devices with an exploration of racial prejudices.

Procedures

After students have read the novel, ask them to assess their relationship to the novel as readers.

- Have you been so overwhelmed by the novel that you feel any negative criticism should be silenced?
- Are you a "spectator" reader who has no real empathy with the characters but has been dazzled by its popular success?
- Have you simply enjoyed reading the novel, and feel that any questioning as to whether it may have reinforced your racial prejudices (if you have any) would destroy your enjoyment?

Ask students to reread Celie's first seven letters and paraphrase their contents.

- Transpose the narrative details in these letters to your own place and time. Rewrite the openings as if the events were happening to you.

Ask about students' attitudes toward Celie.

- Do you feel sorry for Celie? Angry?
- What can you do about a situation with which you may fully empathize, but which you cannot even geographically touch, let alone influence politically?

Source:
Williams, Michael. "Teaching the 'A' Level Text: Alice Walker—*The Color Purple.*" *Use of English, 40* (2), pp.45-55, Spring 1989.

Consider what happens when an author chooses to operate in the first person and the narrator is not, like the author, a literate, well-informed consciousness, but an illiterate, uninformed, unaware, and deprived consciousness who can describe horrendous events which might drive some to suicide and others to murder, and who seems tragically unaware of her own potential for resisting the oppression to which she is subject.

- Where does such a writing strategy place you as a reader?
- Can *The Color Purple* be read, in some ways, as a fairy tale?

Discuss parallels with other fairy tales (such as the Ugly Duckling and Cinderella), *The Tempest,* and Shakespeare's other late plays.

Have students rewrite the first two paragraphs of letter 7:

> "Dear God,
>
> I ast him to take me instead of Nettie while our new mammy sick. But he just ast me what I'm talking bout. I tell him I can fix myself up for him. I duck into my room and come out wearing horsehair, feathers, and a pair of our new mammy high heel shoes. he beat me for dressing trampy but he do it to me anyway.
>
> Mr. _____ come that evening. I'm in the bed crying. Nettie she finally see the light of day, clear. Our new mammy she see it too. She in her room crying. Nettie tend to first one, then the other. She so scared she go out doors and vomit. But not out front where the two mens is."

- Try to add suitable adjectives and adverbs to these two paragraphs.

This will probably be an impossible task, and can lead to a discussion about the limitations which Alice Walker has imposed on herself by writing in role as a young, naive, uninformed black girl.

- Consider the following statement:
  "The duty of the writer is not to be tricked, seduced or goaded into verifying by imitation, or even rebuttal, other people's fantasies. In an oppressive society it may well be that *all* fantasies indulged in by the oppressor are destructive to the oppressed. To become involved in any way at all is, at the very least, to lose time defining yourself."

  Alice Walker, *In Search of Our Mothers' Gardens,* p. 359

- Is it possible that racially prejudiced, white readers might read the novel as an endorsement of their own fantasies about black people?
- Does the novel depict only a *specific* experience, or does it try to present a view of black life in general?

Dandelion Wine

Building "Happiness Machines"

Brief Description

Students build "happiness machines" like the one in Ray Bradbury's *Dandelion Wine*. This assignment is motivated by the Arts in Education approach to teaching English.

Objectives

To encourage students to react beyond questions, answers, and essays, and to gain additional understanding about the students' knowledge and values.

Procedures

- After reading Ray Bradbury's *Dandelion Wine*, design your own "happiness machine" based on the idea of the "happiness machine" in the novel.

The following are examples of students' "happiness machines":

1. A glass container labeled "Pandora's Jar—Do Not Open!" The jar contained a sheet of paper on which was written "War, Pestilence, Famine" in bold red letters.
2. A box from which you could crank out play money.
3. A patriotic encounter where an American flag popped up and down when you knew the machine's secret.
4. A Playboy multimedia presentation.

The following "ground rules" are needed to use an Arts in Education approach effectively:

1. List for yourself the activity's behavioral goals and objectives.
2. Review with students the kinds of learning they have experienced.
3. Scatter arts strategies in flexible time periods between other kinds of learning activities.

Source:
ED 181 461
Silverman, N. Paul. "How Can We Be Learning English When We're Having So Much Fun?" Paper presented at the 69th Annual Meeting of the National Council of Teachers of English, 1979.

Dandelion Wine

An Historical/Cultural Approach

Source:
ED 277 012
Butterfield, Jim. "An Historical-Cultural Approach to 'The Whole Town's Sleeping'." In Chew, Charles (Ed.) and others, *Reader Response in the Classroom*, pp. 43-47. Liverpool, NY: New York State English Council, 1986.

Brief Description

This lesson for Ray Bradbury's short story "The Whole Town's Sleeping" (a section of the novel *Dandelion Wine*) includes a prereading activity that tests students' knowledge of history, and two group activities. These activities present an historical/cultural approach to literature.

Objectives

To establish concepts that will aid students' understanding of the story; to help students understand that history produces a variety of cultural elements; to enable the class to see that it is looking at the story in the same way that a person who studies history does; to elicit certain points that have importance in an historical-cultural interpretation.

Procedures

Activity 1: Defining Time as History

Ask students to define "history" in their own words and write their responses on the board. Choose a student to look up the word in a dictionary, and list that definition with the others on the board.

Give the students worksheets with the headings Wars, Chronological or Historical Order, Year(s) and Cultural Item(s) at the top, and with the following seven wars listed under the Wars heading: Korean War, American Civil War, Vietnam Conflict, War of 1812, World War I, American Revolution, and World War II. You may wish to substitute or add other wars.

- Rearrange and list the wars according to their time in history in the Chronological or Historical Order column.
- Assign one year (or a range of years) during which each war took place in the Year(s) column.
- Associate any object, person, or anything cultural with each war in the Cultural Item(s) column. You may list more than one item in this last column.

When students are finished, collect the worksheets and list the students' responses on the board. Through a diversity of answers, the class begins to see a variety of cultural elements that history produces.

Activity 2: Giving Attention to Time/Setting

Introduce Bradbury's story as a mystery story that involves a particular time. Read the first few pages of the story to the class, stopping at the point where the body is found. Students should finish the story on their own.

During the following class period, discuss questions about the plot, characterization, and general understanding of the story. After the discussion, divide the class into several groups, with each group rereading a section of the story. (The story breaks naturally into several sections; sectioning off will largely depend upon the size of the class and number of groups.)

- In your group, reread your assigned section and look for anything unusual about the characters, setting, vocabulary, dialogue patterns, etc. that has not already been discussed in class. Write down these things to report to the class. List comments that explain why you find each item unusual.

Activity 3: Group Analysis of Characters in the Setting

For the final activity, divide students into three groups. Assign each group one of the following perspectives viewing Lavinia Nebbs: 1) through the eyes of a friend living in the same period of time; 2) through Bradbury's eyes; or 3) through the eyes of a present-day reader.

- In your group, examine the story from your assigned perspective. Then use one of the following statements to compose a well-supported composition:

1. Choose one of Lavinia's close friends. Using evidence from the story, consider what Lavinia means to this friend.
2. Bradbury chose Lavinia as his main character for a reason. After reading the introduction to *Dandelion Wine*, look at her through his eyes, but remember that he is an author looking back at 1928.
3. Look at Lavinia Nebbs from a twentieth century viewpoint, as someone looking back in time.

As the list for the second activity is examined, students must look at the story from two points of view—as a person living in the year 1928 and as a person living in the present. This discussion and sharing forces students to see that they look at the story in the same way that a person who studies history does.

Once the compositions for the third activity are corrected, return them to the class, reading a few of the better ones from each group aloud. Discuss the key points of each perspective. Good writings should elicit certain points that have importance in a historical-cultural interpretation, such as clear-cut differences and similarities between 1928 and the present—in attitudes, customs, the roles of male and female, character stereotypes, and values.

The Grapes of Wrath

Two Evaluative Essays

Source:
ED 255 923
Swanson, Marti. "Writing in the American Novel Class: My Debt to Clarence." In Matthews, Dorothy (Ed.), *Writing Assignments Based on Literary Works*, pp. 2-7. *Illinois English Bulletin*, 72 (3), Spring 1985.

Brief Description

Two evaluative essay assignments, to be used in conjunction with the study of John Steinbeck's *The Grapes of Wrath* in an elective American novel class.

Objective

To help students draw conclusions and discover new insights about *The Grapes of Wrath*.

Procedures: Essay 1

- Make a chart with the words "beginning," "anticipated development," "actual development," "end," and "possible good" written across the top, and the phrases "Rose of Sharon's baby," "the literal grapes of California," "the metaphorical grapes of wrath," and "the efforts at unified action" down the left side of the chart.
- Fill in this chart as you read the novel. You will use this chart to write a final essay about the novel.

The chart helps students ask good questions during class discussions of the novel because they are searching for relevant information for their charts as they read.

- Write an essay comparing Rose of Sharon's baby with the literal grapes of California, the metaphorical grapes of wrath, and all the efforts at unified action. Describe how each motif begins, the development of each (first the anticipated and then the actual development), how each ends, and what possible good or hope, if any, can come from the seeming defeat of each.

For the last part of the description, remind students that Steinbeck states that "Having stepped forward, [humankind] may slip back, but...never the full step back."

Procedures: Essay 2

This second essay assignment involves writing a "made-up" version of the novel, and involves less emphasis on the theme and more emphasis on the characters than does the first essay assignment.

Remind students that the attitudes and values of several of the characters in the novel change during the course of the story.

- **Write an essay that traces the changes in attitudes and values of three of the characters from the novel. Cite specific examples of each character's attitudes and values at the beginning of the novel, the changes in these attitudes and values during the course of the story, and each character's final attitudes and values at the end of the novel. Identify any patterns you see in the changes in attitudes and values that take place. Finally, state whether or not you agree with the soundness of the final values these characters hold. Defend your answers.**

Comments/Notes:

Great Expectations

Role-Playing Charles Dickens

Source:
ED 250 714
Kays, Karen. "Dickens and Company, 'Recalled to Life'." From "Units for Specific Titles: High School" in *Literature - News That Stays News: Fresh Approaches to the Classics. Classroom Practices in Teaching English, 1984*, pp. 76-77. Prepared by the National Council of Teachers of English Committee on Classroom Practices in Teaching English, 1985.

Brief Description

The teacher becomes Charles Dickens for a day, coming to class as a guest speaker from London, England. Students do oral character sketches, becoming characters from *Great Expectations*.

Objective

To make Charles Dickens and the characters in his novel "come alive" for the students as real and interesting people worthy of study.

Procedures

Preparation

Read some books and articles about Charles Dickens. Rent a Victorian-era suit, cravat, top hat, and walking stick. Organize all of the information obtained about Dickens, and include any interesting bits of information not usually found in a typical biography. Announce to the students the day before that a guest speaker from London, England, is coming especially for their English class.

Dickens Appears

Ask a fellow teacher to check attendance and inform the class that their teacher is absent. (This may not be possible for many teachers—you may have to come up with another way of handling this. Perhaps "Charles Dickens" can teach your classes for a day.) Then Charles Dickens is introduced.

As Dickens, talk to the students about your life, feelings, beliefs, and works. Act the way you believe Dickens would have done. In this way, you can show students what Charles Dickens was like, instead of just telling them about him. Once students have actually "met" Charles Dickens, they will be more interested in reading what he wrote.

The Students Get in the Act

Once students have begun to read *Great Expectations*, they can be assigned to do their own oral character sketches.

- Choose a character from the novel and become that person, just as your teacher became Charles Dickens.

Because they are responsible for both the interpretation of their characters and their characters' costumes, students have to do some careful reading and research on the Victorian period in order to make their characters come alive realistically.

A School Tradition

Once this activity has been done at the freshman or sophomore level for several years, many juniors and seniors will have at one time been a character from *Great Expectations*. If so, then on the day that "Dickens" visits the freshman English classes, some of these "former" characters can accompany him. These characters should not do complete character sketches, but should instead tell the students enough about the character portrayed to make those listening want to read all about the character.

Comments/Notes:

The Great Gatsby

Linking the Novel to Personal Experience

Source

ED 306 584

Peck, David. *Novels of Initiation: A Guidebook for Teaching Literature to Adolescents.* Teachers College Press, NY, 1989. pp. 80-82.

Brief Description

Presents several ideas for discussion/writing topics on F. Scott Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*.

Provides suggestions for connecting this novel with other literary works.

Objective

To examine the novel and link it with students' personal experiences.

Procedure

Discussion and Writing Ideas

- Did you ever pursue a goal with single-minded devotion? What happened? Would you have gained your end in any other way?
- Brainstorm and then draft your own formula for success; exchange formulas with another student and discuss them. Then write up what you believe to be your formula.
- You have just found out that your best friend did something illegal (shoplifted a valuable item) and is in jail. What would you do? Why?
- Is Jay Gatsby a "hero"? Why or why not? Do a brief character sketch of this central character. Is he the victim or the author of his tragedy?
- How do you explain the contradiction that Nick "disapproves" of Gatsby and yet says that he's "worth the whole damn bunch put together"? What are Nick's deepest sentiments about Jay Gatsby?
- What does Nick Carraway learn in the course of the novel? (List specific values and lessons.) Why does he return to the Midwest? What kind of moral growth does he demonstrate?
- Discuss the significance of one of the minor characters in the novel—Jordan Baker or George Wilson, for example.
- *The Great Gatsby* is one of the tragic love stories of the twentieth century. What is the attraction of Daisy Buchanan for Jay Gatsby? Why does Daisy abandon Gatsby for Tom?

Explain. (Where do we find such stories today—movies? soap operas?)

- Analyze the use of colors in the novel. What is significant about their use here? What does the "green light" represent to Gatsby, for example? Why green?
- Write a short biography of Scott and Zelda Fitzgerald, showing how their lives are connected to the novel.
- Write a short report on the 1920s and the Jazz Age. What are the parallels to our own age?

Connections to Other Works

1. Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, chapter 2. Compare what Huck and Nick observe in their respective societies about loyalty, human cruelty, etc.

2. Stephen Crane, *The Red Badge of Courage*, chapter 7. What does Henry Fleming learn that parallels the lessons of *The Great Gatsby*?

3. Sherwood Anderson, *Winesburg, Ohio*. These stories of life in a small midwestern town anticipate the subjects of Fitzgerald's novel.

4. T.S. Eliot, "The Waste Land." This is a difficult poem, but students may find parallels to Fitzgerald's novel, particularly in the idea of spiritual decay.

5. Ernest Hemingway, *The Sun Also Rises*. Hemingway and Fitzgerald are generally considered the two best writers of the "lost generation," and Hemingway's best novel explores some of the same themes—disillusionment, moral shallowness—that we find in *The Great Gatsby*.

6. Robert Cormier, *The Chocolate War*, chapter 3. How is the world of Trinity similar to the world Nick views?

The Hobbit

Questions for Literal Response

Source:
ED 264 521
Levinski, Carol, and others. *A Look at Books. Demonstration Program in Reading, Santa Fe Middle School Teacher to Teacher*, 1983. pp. 21, 63-64.

Brief Description

Presents a series of questions about J. R. R. Tolkein's *The Hobbit*. Answers are provided in the source.

Objective

To help students learn to read for a purpose as well as for enjoyment.

Procedures

Students are to answer the following questions in complete sentences. Each answer should be a rephrasing of the question as a statement, and should begin with a noun rather than a pronoun whenever possible.

Chapters 1 — 5

- Describe a hobbit.
- Where do hobbits live?
- Who was Gandalf? Thorin? Describe them.
- Describe Bilbo Baggins. Why does Gandalf choose him to go with them?
- How does Gandalf let the dwarfs know to come to Bilbo's house?
- What were Thorin's and his company's terms for Bilbo's services?
- What do they plan to do?
- What was the obstacle that the group encountered early in their journey? What effect did it have on Bilbo and the dwarfs? What part does Gandalf play?
- The group has a frightening experience in a cave up in the mountains. Describe what happens.
- Following the adventure in the cave, Bilbo is knocked unconscious. What does he find when he wakes up, at this "turning point in his career"? What power does his discovery have?
- Who was Gollum? What does he make Bilbo do?
- Who were the Wild Wargs? Describe the experience with the Wild Wargs. What was the final outcome?

Chapters 6—10

- Why does the Lord of the Eagles help Gandalf?
- Describe how you would feel if you were Bilbo flying on the eagle's back.
- Who is the "Somebody"?
- How does Gandalf make sure that Beorn will see them?
- Describe the woods of Mirkwood.
- What happens in these woods to make Mr. Baggins feel much fiercer and bolder?
- How does Bilbo rescue his friend from the Wood-elves?

Chapters 11—15

- Describe Smaug. How is he finally killed?
- How does Bilbo try to settle the impasse between Thorin and the elves and the lake people?
- Tell about the final battle.
- What does Bilbo find when he finally arrives home?
- Would you recommend this book to a friend? Why?
- Which character would you like to be? Why?

Comments/Notes:

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

A Comprehensive Set of Questions

Source:
ED 250 714
Kitzhaber, Albert R. *Huckleberry Finn. Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde. Short Stories. Literature Curriculum IV, Teacher Version*. Oregon Curriculum Study Center, Oregon University, Eugene, OR. Project supported through the Cooperative Research Program of the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, pp. 19-23.

Brief Description

Presents a set of discussion questions to use with Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. These questions can also be used as prompts for writing assignments.

Objectives

To guide students through a comprehensive exploration of the novel.

Procedures

These questions should be asked after either the entire novel has been read or after the corresponding sections have been read.

Prologue (Chapters I-III)

- What does Huck think of the widow? Of Miss Watson? What elements of society might they represent?
- In chapter II Huck joins the gang. Is he any better off for leaving the organized, restricted world of Miss Watson?
- The arrival of Pap introduces a second phase in the young hero's struggle. Huck's money puts him in the community. He attempts to get rid of the money by "selling" it to the judge. This fails; Pap, of course, will stick around as long as there is a possibility of getting Huck's money. The lawsuit drags on. Huck will either be placed under the guardianship of the Widow or live with his father. Are these alternatives any solution to Huck's problem? What social institution at work here is against Huck's liberation?
- Recall what other codes of civilization infringed upon Huck. At first, Huck enjoys living with his father on the Illinois shore; it appears to be the better choice. However, his life is hardly ideal. What is Huck's attitude toward Pap's treatment of him? Is it one of fear, love, or genuine respect?
- Consider Pap's relationship to organized society. What aspects of society does he loudly lambast—ineffectual though he is?
- If Miss Watson represents a thoroughly organized society, what does Pap represent? Yet, is his attitude toward the "nigger" much different from Miss Watson's?

Jim (Chapters VIII-XI)

- What does Huck's escape indicate about his knowledge of the ways of violence as well as about his basic intelligence?
- Once his death is confirmed, he has time on his hands to think. What problem, brought out earlier in the prologue, does the fugitive Huck re-experience now that he is "boss" of his island? How is this resolved?
- What common condition does Jim, the runaway slave, now share with Huck?
- Can you see a difference between the imagery that Mark Twain presents as he describes the increasing tempo of the storm and the images presented at the end of the mounting cadences of the sentence describing the storm? This is typical of Mark Twain's style at its best, and one can see a similar contrast occurring within chapter IX as a whole.
- Can you see two images in chapter IX? Do you see the latter image, the ugly "House of Death," as intruding upon the beautiful, natural scene described earlier? What might the contrast of these scenes foreshadow about the fate of Jim and Huck, safely isolated from society? Can they remain this way for very long?
- Huck shouldn't expect any problem, since he has been considered officially dead. His loneliness has been overcome since the arrival of Jim. But this very fact has placed a new responsibility on Huck. What is it?

For approximately eight chapters, Twain presents a continuous narrative emphasizing the themes of rebellion and loneliness, bringing this phase of the story to a resolution by joining Huck and Jim. Chapter IX appears to be almost a lyrical climax, as Twain presents the spectacular storm viewed by the fugitives from their cave refuge. As students reread Twain's magnificent desription of the storm, have them comment on the length of the last sentence. What advantage can they see in writing it this way?

Conscience

- What happens when Huck's heart and his conscience do battle in "The Rattlesnakeskin Does Its Work"? Which is the victor? Trace his struggle when it occurs again in "You Can't Pray a Lie." Does he rationalize so easily after this second victory.
- Why couldn't he pray? How does he arrive at his final commitment, "All right, then, I'll go to hell"? What plans does he make after these "awful thoughts and awful words"?
- In one sense, Huck has very little confidence in himself. Comparing himself with Tom, for example, he views Tom as being good, while he himself is bad. Society's code is on the side of right; he is not. Once he decides to help Jim escape from the Phelp's farm, he accepts his decision as being immoral, but he can't accept Tom as being equally corrupt. Following this kind of reasoning, why do you think he is so relieved when he discovers that Tom, who directed Jim's escape, knew all along that Jim had been set free?

Slavery was as much a part of Huck's world as were leaves on a tree, blue skies, and the rolling river. "Negroes" were not considered to be people; they were merely property. Remember Aunt Sally's reaction to Huck's tale of the steamboat accident? "'Good gracious! Anybody hurt?' she asked. 'No'm. Killed a nigger.' 'Well,' she answered, 'it's lucky; because sometimes people do get hurt.'" But Jim becomes something more than property to Huck. He removes the loneliness; he humbles Huck at the end of "Fooling Poor Old Jim." And Huck says that he "warn't ever sorry for it afterwards." Here love conquers pride, and the battle is not a long nor a very strenuous one. "It was fifteen minutes before I could work myself up to go and humble myself to a nigger."

- Do you think Mark Twain might have been using Huck to show that the laws of society or the customs of a particular culture are sometimes wrong? Explain.
- Had his conscience been as deeply molded by society as it might at first appear? Consider how instinctively good Huck was on so many occasions. Consider, too, the contrast in Huck. He feels sympathy for almost everyone, and yet he trusts no one except Jim. Give examples to show that although Huck knew of human weakness and depravity, he never lost his basically sympathetic nature.

The River

- Beginning with Chapter XII, the river seems to become the main determinant of the narrative sequence. More than that, it becomes symbolically significant. Select passages that show how Huck feels about the river. What might the river symbolize?
- The drift past Cairo in the fog marks a turning point in the lives of the fugitives and in the structure of the book as well. Defend or deny this statement, supporting your opinion by referring to specific events and to the way in which these events are presented.
- The intrusion of the Duke and the King into the lives of Jim and Huck brings on a whole series of difficulties which finally terminate in the two being tarred and feathered. What might Mark Twain's attitude have been toward royalty in general, when we consider the escapades of these two confidence men?
- What did Huck learn about human nature in the Colonel Sherburn incident?

Phelps Farm: Problems

- The concluding episode on the little cotton plantation where Jim is being held offers an interesting contrast between Tom and Huck. Contrast and compare the two.
- Recent critics have expressed their dissatisfaction with Mark Twain's conclusion to his tale of Huckleberry Finn. Do you feel satisfied with the ending of the book? If not, what would you have done?
- Would you have allowed Jim to be killed by the bullet that was intended for him and thus force Tom to suffer, knowing that his withholding of the knowledge of Jim's freedom was the real murder weapon? Would you have allowed Huck to bring about Jim's escape without the questionable assistance of Tom, thus enabling the two fugitives to return to their raft and to their search for freedom?

My Antonia

Ensuring Genuine, Individual Responses

Brief Description

Allows students to determine how fast to read Willa Cather's *My Antonia*, what activities/formats they use in reacting to it, and how their efforts are graded.

Source

Schaars, Mary Jo. "Teaching *My Antonia*, with Guidance from Rosenblatt," *English Journal*, 77 (1), January 1988, pp. 54-58.

Objectives

To generate genuine individual responses from students and reflect the recommendations inherent in Louise M. Rosenblatt's transactional theory.

Procedures

Students brainstorm about the meaning of the phrase "reading for pleasure." Announce that since you have picked the book, the students can decide how the reading will be done, how they will react to it, and how they will be graded. One group of students, for example, decided to read the book in large sections, write a page about each section, and discuss what they read in class. They were not graded on discussion, but only on whether they completed daily writing. A final writing assignment was evaluated qualitatively.

Undirected Discussion and Writing

For most of the following week, let students discuss aspects of the book they find interesting, puzzling, or attractive.

- Write in your journal about what you read each day, discussing your feelings, quotations you like, questions you have, comments you have on relationships between characters in the book, and opinions about the book.

Read the students' journals and react in the margins to their entries.

Writing Assignment

Write several pages about any topic related to the book. Students often muse about the relationship between Jim and Antonia, and about their disappointment that it does not lead to marriage.

Lord of the Flies

Role-Playing Responses to the Novel

Source:
ED 279 996
Lucie-Nietzke, Teresa. "*Lord of the Flies*: A Cooperative Approach." In Matthews, Dorothy (Ed.), "Getting Students to Read: New Materials and Methods," pp. 41-43. *Illinois English Bulletin*, 74 (2), Winter 1987.

Brief Description

This unit is a cooperative learning approach to William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* in which students "become" the boys on Golding's island. Their task is to study the novel together as a class with the teacher serving, for the most part, only as a resource.

Objectives

To eliminate the competition between students for grades and to encourage students to work together in finding answers and completing their assigned task.

Procedures

Set up the situation by telling the students that they have been stranded in their classroom, which is "uninhabited." Their task is to study William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*. Explain that the materials they need to study and discuss can be found on your desk. Give students a handout which explains their situation in writing and also sets up certain guidelines and objectives, as well as a schedule of activities for the students.

Since the classroom is their "island," one of the guidelines is that they must spend the entire class period "on" it. The "food" and "fire" necessary for their survival come in the form of work on your desk, which they must complete. Students may organize their uninhabited classroom in any way they like and can conduct their discussions and homework in any manner. They must also supply you with a list of the people who are absent each day and their graded assignments. They are also, of course, required to follow the rules of the school.

At times, you will step in to lecture, hold a discussion, or give students an assignment. At all other times, however, you act for the most part as a resource person and should fade into the woodwork once the guidelines and assignment have been given.

Supplying the Objectives

The objectives which appear on the handout could include any of the following:

- In addition to understanding the structural elements of a novel, character development, symbolism, etc., you will accomplish the following: 1) Gain a better understanding of why Golding viewed humans as inherently evil, 2) Discover whether or not your "good conduct" is dependent upon someone's watching you, 3) Discover whether you are more of a leader or a follower, 4) Discover if you are inclined to be a constructive (giving) or destructive (taking) individual in society, 5) Gain a better understanding of the relationship between freedom and responsibility, 6) Apply understandings (1-5) to other areas of your life to enrich it.

This unit gives students a chance to experience behaviors and patterns of thinking which strongly resemble those that the characters in Golding's novel experienced. Because students have a concrete experience which supplies details for them, the quality of their writing improves. The students freely and openly express the not-so-positive qualities of the fictional characters which they also exhibit.

Some Options and Activities

You may wish to lecture or lead a discussion for a portion of the class periods allotted for this unit. This would help keep the class on target and enable you to cover terminology or provide information and answer any questions.

Another activity is an informal research assignment.

- Choose a philosopher and read some of that philosopher's writings that relate to themes in Golding's novel.
- Write a one-page summary and report your findings to the class in a short, informal speech.

Another tool of evaluation, in addition to an exam, is a written assignment based on the following question:

- Which character in *Lord of the Flies* did your own behavior during this unit most resemble? Explain this by giving specific examples both of your behavior and of the character's behavior.

Lord of the Flies and *Heart of Darkness*

Comparing Themes in Two Classics

Source:
ED 250 714
Beem, Jane A. "Golding as a Key to Conrad" from "Linking the Classics: Approaches to Multiple Titles." In *Literature - News That Stays News: Fresh Approaches to the Classics Classroom Practices in Teaching English, 1984*, pp. 3-6. Prepared by the National Council of Teachers of English Committee on Classroom Practices in Teaching English, (1983).

Brief Description

Describes a series of assignments focusing on William Golding's *Lord of the Flies* and Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, comparing themes and characters in the two novels.

Objectives

To promote discussion about human nature and societal problems. The discussion and comparison of *Lord of the Flies* to *Heart of Darkness* also makes Conrad's novel much more accessible to high school students than if they were required to read Conrad's novel alone.

Procedure

Have students write an impromptu paper on the following topic:

- What would you do if you were leader of a group stranded on an island?

The next day during class, read the papers aloud. Do not reveal the writers' names. Instead, students are free to stand up and take a bow if they like or to sit and say nothing. Encourage students to remember the ideas expressed in these papers so that they can be re-examined later to see who comes closest to the insights Golding reveals in his novel about the dilemma of being stranded on an island.

Discussing Leadership in **Lord of the Flies**

Next, have students read *Lord of the Flies*. On the day before class discussion of the novel is to begin, have each student write one question about the novel on a piece of paper to bring to class the next day. Start the discussion with these questions. Students will probably raise questions about ethics and human nature, so the discussion can become very lively. You may also want to present comments which critics have made about the novel and ask students to explain why they agree or disagree with each comment.

Introducing Joseph Conrad

After reading and discussing *Lord of the Flies,* give students some background information on Joseph Conrad, so that students will be aware of the personal influences on his novel. Plan daily discussions of this novel as it is being read, so students can absorb the story and have the details clear in their minds.

Comparing Themes in the Novels

Once students have finished reading *Heart of Darkness,* the class can compare the themes of the two novels. Both novels deal with the dark side of human nature. Ralph's reference to "the darkness of man's heart" leads to a class discussion of the flaws in human nature which are demonstrated by Jack, Roger, Kurtz, and even Ralph at times.

Darkness Imagery

Ralph's comment also leads to a discussion of imagery. The imagery of darkness is prevalent throughout Conrad's novel in particular. As Marlow relates his story, he reflectively compares those who conquered England to more recent conquerors. He points out that conquerors, in whatever age, have had to "tackle a darkness." Yet he suggests that the cruelty with which they conquer the savage, mysterious, incomprehensible darkness is in itself a kind of darkness—one of blindness, perhaps of ignorance, certainly of insensitivity and fear of the unknown. The darkness of the jungle produces fear in both novels. In Golding's novel, the boys believe that the beast lives in the jungle; in Conrad's novel, Marlow must penetrate the darkness of the jungle to discover whether the eyes in the foliage which watch him are friendly or hostile. Both novels also present the journey into a more primitive lifestyle as a journey into darkness, which symbolizes ignorance, mystery, evil, and death.

Man's Inhumanity to Man

"Man's inhumanity to man" is a theme which is also developed by both novels. As the characters in both novels move further and further from society, signs of civilization within themselves dissipate. For instance, when Roger first throws stones at Percival in *Lord of the Flies,* the restraints of civilization cause him to throw the stones in such a way that he does not harm Percival. However, he later viciously kills Piggy by rolling a huge boulder onto him. The boys also attack and kill Simon, the one person who could have ended their ignorance and fear of the beast. Marlow also witnesses a movement away from civilization the further he penetrates the darkness of the jungle. At the first station he meets the elegant chief accountant; at the central station he sees the stealthy "papier-mache

Unlike the largely student-dominated discussion of Golding's novel, you should guide the discussion of *Heart of Darkness* and serve as a resource person for the students. You may, for example, need to give students some background information on the Roman conquest of Britain so that students will better understand the significance of the beginning of Marlow's tale. You may also want to provide students with a map which traces Marlow's journey. Referring back to similarities in *Lord of the Flies* may help to clarify ideas and situations encountered in Conrad's novel.

Using *Lord of the Flies* as a lead-in for *Heart of Darkness* can generate interest in the latter. If students are challenged to look for similarities, the reading of *Heart of Darkness* becomes something of a game. There is adventure in discovery, so students should have the a chance to discover as many similarities as they can on their own.

Mephistopheles" who manages the station. Finally, at the inner station, he encounters the ruthless power of Kurtz. The effects of civilization are so far removed from Kurtz that, as he dies, all he can say to explain his experience are the words, "the horror."

Individual Ethics vs the Political System

Another theme which both novels expound is stated in Golding's novel: "The shape of a society must depend on the ethical nature of the individual and not on any political system, however apparently logical or respectable" (*Lord of the Flies*, New York: Capricorn, 1959. p. 189). This theme is developed by Golding when Ralph's democratic system cannot prevail against the power of Jack's personality, whereby the unethical nature of one individual leads the boys into savagery. While some of the boys join Jack's group willingly, others are forced to follow him. Conrad develops this theme through the character of Kurtz. Marlow is sent to find Kurtz because Kurtz has been out of touch with civilization for so long. Although it is never clear exactly what the horror is, it is obvious that Kurtz's personality controls the people around him. Somehow, he has managed to get the people in the inner station and the surrounding area to produce large amounts of ivory for him. His methods in achieving this feat are somewhat questionable, as is evidenced by the heads which decorate the fenceposts and his own repetition of the phrase, "the horror." Although both Kurtz and Jack exploit the people around them, they still manage to get these people to follow them.

Comments/Notes:

The Member of the Wedding

Affective and Analytical Writing Topics

Brief Description

Presents several ideas for discussion/writing topics on Carson McCullers' *The Member of the Wedding*. Provides suggestions for connecting this novel with other literary works.

Source

ED 306 584

Peck, David. *Novels of Initiation: A Guidebook for Teaching Literature to Adolescents.* Teachers College Press, NY, 1989. pp. 125-127.

Objective

To examine the novel and link it with students' personal experiences.

Procedure

Affective Topics

- Select someone you know well or have observed at close range and write a character sketch, illustrating that person's most important physical and personality traits.
- How does Frankie appear to you? Write a character sketch of her, noting her most important physical and personality traits.
- Consider how you have changed in the past five years, and describe what you were before and what you are now. (You may want to focus on one area—family relationships, for example, or school.)
- Briefly describe an experience (a person, incident, or relationship) that changed you in some fundamental way and detail how it affected you.
- Think about and describe the various roles you play in your life (brother or sister, friend, student, etc.). Do different people see you differently because they view you only in one or another of those roles (e.g., parents who see you as less responsible than a boss does)?
- Think of a relationship you have shared with someone (a friend or relative) in which definite changes have occurred. Describe the relationship and those changes.
- How did you feel when you read that John Henry had died? Why? What is the loss?

- Describe something you wanted very badly—as Frankie wanted to go off with Jarvis and Janice—but did not get. What did your disappointment feel like? How did you get over it?

Analytical Topics

- Describe the relationship between Frankie and Bernice. What is it like and how has it changed by the end?
- Frankie thinks that she would like "for her expression to be split into two parts," as Bernice's is. Why? What does this split represent?
- What is the role of the red-haired soldier? Write a letter from him to a friend, after this weekend. What would he say about what happened with Frankie?
- Compare Frankie at the beginning and at the end of the novel. Is she different? How? Are the changes positive or not? Discuss.
- Write a description of Frankie Addams ten years later. What is she doing? What is she like? What does she think now of her early adolescence? Did she learn anything from this period? What important incidents have occurred in the interim?
- Discuss setting. What is important about where the novel takes place? (Consider the location, the season, and the time of day in different scenes.) What feeling does a particular scene give to us? How much of that feeling has to do with the setting?
- Read the play version of *The Member of the Wedding* and compare the two. What does the play stress? Leave out?

Bridging to Other Works

1. Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, chapter 2. Compare the two young Southern protagonists and the themes of illusion/reality.

2. Tennessee Williams, *The Glass Menagerie*. Compare settings and themes—illusions, expectations—in this play from the same period.

3. J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*, chapter 1. How are Frankie Addams and Holden Caulfield similar?

4. James Agee, *A Death in the Family*. Compare settings, characters, and themes.

5. Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, chapter 8. Compare setting (a small Southern town), characters, moods, and themes (initiation, etc.).

Of Mice and Men

A Strategic Teaching Model

Brief Description

Presents a directed reading and writing lesson that includes topic discussion questions dealing with the students' own experiences in situations encountered in John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*. Also provides vocabulary words, reading guide questions, and a writing prompt directing students to write about an experience from the novel and allowing them to draw on their own experiences.

Source:
ED 274 982
Gelsinger, Barry D. "Using Literature-Based Prompts to Teach Writing Competencies: Directed Reading and Writing Lessons." Paper presented at the Spring Conference of the Maryland Council of Teachers of English Language Arts, 1986.

Objectives

To improve students' vocabulary, reading, and writing skills. An integrated unit of composition/literature study such as this also teaches writing competencies and provides students with the opportunity to gain new experiences and to gain more understanding of past ones.

Procedures

Topic Discussion Questions

Ask students 3-5 questions that they can answer by drawing on their personal experiences, ideas, or opinions.

Relate questions to the experiences in the literature, but don't require students to read the selection in order to answer.

- **Have you ever had dreams that were ruined? What were they? How did you feel?**
- **What was the Depression? When did it happen?**
- **How were people's dreams shattered during the Depression?**
- **Do you think it is important to have dreams? Why?**
- **What is the American Dream?**

Students can answer questions individually; the questions can be listed on the chalkboard or overhead projector so that the students can take a few minutes to jot down their responses before a class discussion of those responses is begun; or students can work in small discussion groups to generate responses before starting a class discussion.

Answering the Reading Guide Questions

Once students have read the novel, have them discuss their answers to the reading guide questions. Review any parts of the literature that the class does not understand or finds confusing. Once the reading guide questions have been answered and any confusion is cleared up, focus on the experience in the novel. Discuss anything that is gained, lost, or learned by the characters through the experience.Then encourage students to discuss their personal and emotional responses to the experiences in the literature.

Vocabulary

List 3-5 vocabulary words from the novel that students may find difficult or confusing.

Define these words as they are used in the novel:
imperiously: in a commanding or dominant way
mottled: surface with colored spots or blotches
bindle: a bundle, usually of bedding, carried by a hobo
swamper: general assistant; handy man, helper

Reading Guide Questions

List 3-5 "guide questions" that are related to the experience in the novel and that students answer as they read the selection.

- How are George and Lennie different from other men?
- Which characters in the story have dreams? What are those dreams? What has happened to their dreams?
- Why is Brooks bitter?
- Why does Curley's wife always talk to the men?
- Why can't the other men understand George's sadness about killing Lennie?

Writing Assignments

Give students a writing prompt directing them to write about the experience in the novel and that allows them to draw from the personal experiences that they discussed before they read.

- In Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men*, many of the characters have dreams. Write an essay explaining the characters' dreams and their importance.
- Before you start writing, think about the effect of the time of the Depression in America and its peoples' dreams. Secondly, think about what each character's dream is. Then, consider how that dream turns out, the result, and its effects on the character.
- Now write an essay explaining the characters' dreams in *Of Mice and Men*.

(Note: Other writing prompts, for use with the type of directed reading and writing approach described above, are included on the following pages for these novels: *1984*, *The Red Badge of Courage*, and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.)

The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

A Directed Writing Prompt

Brief Description

Presents a writing prompt for Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. The prompt was originally designed to be used with a directed reading and writing lesson, such as the previous lesson for John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (see pages 39-40).

Objective

To explore literature from a personal perspective.

Procedures

Read or pass out the following writing prompt for a writing assignment about Mark Twain's *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

- In *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, Huck wants to be friends with Jim, but at first feels that he can't because of society's discrimination against black people. Write a paragraph describing a time when you wanted to be friends with someone but were afraid to because of the way others viewed that person.
- Before writing, consider these things: where and when you first met this person, your first reaction to that person, and the reason for your feeling that you couldn't be friends.
- After planning, write your paragraph about the friendship that couldn't happen.

Source:
ED 274 982
Gelsinger, Barry D. "Using Literature-Based Writing Prompts To Teach Writing Competencies: Directed Reading and Writing Lessons." Paper presented at the Spring Conference of the Maryland Council of Teachers of English Language Arts, 1986.

The Red Badge of Courage

Examining Change in Character

Source:
ED 274 982
Gelsinger, Barry D. "Using Literature-Based Writing Prompts To Teach Writing Competencies: Directed Reading and Writing Lessons." Paper presented at the Spring Conference of the Maryland Council of Teachers of English Language Arts, 1986.

Brief Description

Presents a writing prompt for Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*. The prompt was originally designed to be used with a directed reading and writing lesson, such as the lesson for John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (see pages 39-40).

Objectives

To examine thoughtfully character development in a novel.

Procedure

- Write two paragraphs about Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage* comparing Henry's initial maturity level to the level that he achieves at the end of the novel. Explain this change.
- Before you begin writing, think about things that would indicate Henry's maturity. Consider Henry's views on battle both before and after he has experienced it. Also consider changes in Henry's words and actions as a result of his experiences in the battles.
- Now write at least two well-organized paragraphs in which you discuss Henry Fleming's growth in *The Red Badge of Courage*.

1984

A Guided Writing Assignment

Brief Description

Presents a writing prompt for an assignment about George Orwell's *1984*. The prompt was originally designed to be used with a directed reading and writing lesson, such as the lesson for John Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* (see pages 39-40).

Objective

To explore literature from a personal perspective.

Procedures

- Suppose you are a "prole" in George Orwell's world of Oceania. You have just come across Winston's diary in an old curiosity shop and you are fascinated by the things he wrote. You have just come to the passage in which he asserts, "If there is any hope, it lies with the proles!" You wonder, will the proles ever rebel? Write a passage in your own diary speculating on that question.
- Before you start writing, consider the life of the proles in Oceania. What demands are made on them? How does the government treat them? What do they value in life? Think about what they might gain or lose if they rebel, and whether they have the ability to rebel. Think about the form of Winston's diary and whether a prole's diary might be similar or different.
- Now, write a passage from the diary of a prole who has just read Winston Smith's ideas and is reacting to whether there is any hope that the proles will ever rebel.

Source

ED 274 982

Gelsinger, Barry D. "Using Literature-Based Prompts To Teach Writing Competencies: Directed Reading and Writing Lessons." Paper presented at the Spring Conference of the Maryland Council of Teachers of English Language Arts, 1986.

The Pigman

Focusing on Developmental Stages

Source

CS 211 855

Beau Fly Jones, and others. *Teaching Thinking Skills: English/Language Arts.* Washington, DC: National Education Association, 1987. p. 60-63.

Brief Description

Describes a lesson in which students consider the major theme of adolescence and old age in Paul Zindel's *The Pigman.*

Objective

To help students discover how stages of development are states of mind as well as physical stages.

Procedures

- Define one characteristic of adolescence and one of old age, and then evaluate whether or not the characteristic is unique to adolescence or old age.

Summarize several characteristics of adolescence and old age in a matrix on the chalkboard. Possible row headings for the matrix are Work, School, Personal Relationships, Responsibilities, and Physical Characteristics.

At the end of the discussion, review the unique characteristics of each period of life. If necessary, review and discuss the following questions. Students may use these questions to help identify the theme. Explain that Zindel focuses on different roles in adolescence and old age, and that many of the clues for the theme come from the behavior of the characters as they move from one role to another.

- Are there any clues to the theme in the title?
- Does the author state the theme(s) directly?
- To what topic does the author give the most attention (surviving, hardships, search for meaning, etc.)?
- Are there clues from the characters' conversations or thoughts?
- How do the characters change? What lessons do they learn?
- What are the main problems or conflicts (one character against another, etc.)?
- Are there clues to the theme from the characters' actions? Is their behavior normal or deviant? Rational or irrational? Constructive or destructive?

- Is there anything about the setting that is distinctive or unusual?

Explain that it is helpful to generate a general hypothesis of a theme and then to look for concrete examples to refine the hypothesis.

- What are your general impressions of Zindel's theme about development and the different age-roles in life? Support your ideas.
- What is the meaning of the adolescents' dressing up in adult clothes and playing adult roles: were they being childlike or more adult?

Discuss how this episode relates to students' general impressions of the theme.

Using the following questions, ask students to suggest and discuss criteria for writing about a theme.

- What is the theme of the selection? (Give a general statement.)
- Can you be more specific? Can you elaborate?
- What are some key examples of the author's illustration of the theme—e.g., the characters' behavior?
- What does this theme mean for your life? For other people's lives?
- Use the above criteria to write a summary of the theme.

Discuss what students have learned about the roles of various developmental stages in life, especially adolescence and old age. Compare their ideas to ideas they had before the lesson. Relate these new learnings to personal growth/experience.

During or after the discussion about themes, ask students to pause and identify anything they don't understand. Have students compare their ideas about the theme to ideas in other sources, such as your teacher notes or literary critiques.

Discuss the value of looking back to reread or skim certain portions of the novel to help clarify misunderstandings.

A Separate Peace, Macbeth, When the Legends Die

Writing Activities for Three Classics

Source:
ED 236 607
Gallo, Donald R. "Writing from Literature." In *Exercise Exchange*, 27 (1), Fall 1982, pp. 32-34.

Brief Description

Presents a set of activities designed for *A Separate Peace, Macbeth,* and *When the Legends Die.* Students may be assigned one, a few, or all of the activities listed for each work.

Procedure

A Separate Peace by John Knowles

Students choose from the following writing assignments:

1. A diary entry for each of several days to record Gene's feelings about some of Phineas' actions.
2. A newspaper account of Phineas' fall from the tree.
3. A eulogy Gene might write for Phineas' funeral.
4. A questionnaire that might be distributed to the boys at the school to determine their interests. Choose a character and fill out the questionnaire as that character might have done.

When the Legends Die by Hal Borland

Students choose from the following writing assignments:

1. An editorial about the treatment of Indian children at a Bureau of Indian Affairs school.
2. A series of newspaper accounts of Tom Black's rodeo exploits.
3. A letter of recommendation for Tom Black to become "Cowboy of the Year."

Macbeth by William Shakespeare

Students choose from the following writing assignments:

1. A script for the CBS Evening News recounting the murder of Duncan, or of Banquo, or of the death of Macbeth.
2. A psychiatrist's report on Lady Macbeth.
3. An entry in *Who's Who* for Macbeth.
4. An ultimatum from Macduff to Macbeth to surrender.
5. A suicide note from Lady Macbeth to her husband.
6. An obituary for Macbeth.

The Red Badge of Courage

Encouraging Connections to Literature

Brief Description

Presents prereading activities and discussion and writing ideas for Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*. Suggests ways to connect this novel with other literary works.

Source

ED 306 584

Peck, David. *Novels of Initiation: A Guidebook for Teaching Literature to Adolescents.* Teachers College Press, NY, 1989. pp. 96-98.

Objectives

To examine and link the novel to students' personal experiences.

Procedure

Prereading Activities

- Describe an event you anticipated with fear. What finally happened? Was the actual event worth the dread? What did you learn from the experience?
- Write about a time when you had illusions about a person or thing. What happened to them? Was the reality better or worse than your illusions? How did your illusions help or hinder you?

Discussion and Writing Ideas

- Reflect on an error or wrong that you committed in the past and the thoughts that you used as rationalizations. How was your experience like Henry's?
- Henry's story is in part about peer pressure. Write about a time when you did something because of the expectations of others. What did you learn?
- Write a report as a staff psychologist evaluating how Henry handles the psychological effects of war. What can you write positively about his efforts? How are his fears and actions like those of other soldiers?
- What does the novel say about fear? duty? luck? Write about one of these ideas as it is described in the novel.
- What is the point of the scene between the fat soldier and the horse at the opening of the novel?
- What is the significance of a "house standing placidly" that Henry sees several times?

- Write a character sketch of Henry Fleming. What is he like? What are his major qualities? What does he learn?
- Analyze the plot of the novel. How does it unfold? What are its characteristics?
- What evidence can you find of foreshadowing in the novel? In particular, how is the death of Jim Conklin foreshadowed?
- Analyze the references to "Nature" in the novel, and discuss what significance it has for Crane. Is nature "benign and indifferent"?

Connections to Other Works

1. Nathaniel Hawthorne, *The Scarlet Letter*. Compare Henry Fleming and Arthur Dimmesdale in terms of guilt.
2. Mark Twain, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, chapter 2. Compare the two protagonists in terms of heroism and self-knowledge.
3. Ernest Hemingway, *A Farewell to Arms*. Compare Hemingway's description of World War I with Crane's description of the Civil War.
4. Kurt Vonnegut, *Slaughterhouse Five*. Compare the character of Billy Pilgrim, in this black comedy about World War II, with Henry Fleming.
5. Robert Cormier, *The Chocolate War*, chapter 3. Compare Henry Fleming and Jerry Renault, in this other novel about courage and fear, in terms of how much they learn and develop in the course of the novels.

Comments/Notes:

The Red Pony

Exploring Values through Literature

Brief Description

Provides several ideas for discussion and writing topics on John Steinbeck's *The Red Pony*. Suggests how this novella can be related to discussion about other novels and short stories.

Source

ED 306 584

Peck, David. *Novels of Initiation: A Guidebook for Teaching Literature to Adolescents.* Teachers College Press, NY, 1989. pp. 138-140.

Objectives

To examine the values and lessons learned by Jody (the novella's main character) by relating these aspects of the novella to the students' own experiences.

Procedures

Affective Discussion/Writing Ideas

Play excerpts from Aaron Copland's score for the 1949 film version of *The Red Pony*. Have students write down the scenes they imagine from the novella or free-write to the music.

- Parents play different roles in different families. Briefly describe the role of your parent(s) in relation to your growth and development.
- Recall and briefly describe an event or person (parent, grandparent, other adult) that influenced the way you view history and the past.
- Select a person from whom you have learned a valuable lesson through his/her words/deeds. Describe the lesson and how you have applied it to your life.
- Write about Jody Tiflin 20 years after the end of the novella. Where is Jody at age 32, and what is he doing?
- What would you change on the Tiflin ranch if you were in Jody's shoes and had the power to do it? Why?
- Describe an experience you had that taught you responsibility. Be specific in your description.
- His grandfather tells Jody, in "The Leader of the People," that the westward migration is "finished." If you were Jody today, and wanted to emigrate to a different place, where would you go? Why?

The other 11 stories in *The Long Valley*, although not having Jody Tiflin as a character, are related to *The Red Pony* by setting (the Salinas Vally) and theme (survival, death, initiation). Consider especially the stories, "The Crysanthemums" and "Flight."

Analytical Discussion/Writing Topics

- What specifically does Jody learn about death in the first three stories of *The Red Pony*? Does he get a similar message in each story? What is it?
- What does Jody learn about history (or about attitudes toward the past) in "The Leader of the People"? What does he learn from his grandfather in this story? From the other characters?
- Describe the roles that Jody's parents play in *The Red Pony*. What does Jody learn from them? How important are they in his growth? Who is more important in this development, his mother or father?
- Describe the role of Billy Buck, the Tiflins' ranch hand and Jody's mentor. What does Billy teach Jody, both by what he says and what he does?
- Describe the roles that Gitano and Jody's grandfather play in the novella. What does Jody learn from each man? Are there any similarities in these lessons?
- Write about responsibility and human fallibility in *The Red Pony*. Who or what is responsible for the deaths of Gabilan and Nellie? What could have been done to save them? What does Jody learn from their deaths, if anything?
- Describe the influence of setting in this novella. Could the stories here have taken place somewhere else? Where? Why or why not?

Connections with Other Works

1. Harper Lee, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, chapter 9. Compare the fathers in the two novels.
2. William Armstrong, *Sounder*. Note the parallels of rural life, relation to animals.
3. Robert Newton Peck, *A Day No Pigs Would Die*, chapter 11. Compare what the two young protagonists learn about death and responsibility.

The Scarlet Letter

Affective and Critical Activities

Brief Description

Presents several oral and written exercises in which students carefully read and reread Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter* and respond in a variety of modes.

Source

ED 228 656

Reigstad, Thomas J. "The Scarlet Letter." In McLeod, Alan M. (Ed), "Books Still Worth Reading," pp. 33-35. *Virginia English Bulletin*, 33 (1), Spring 1983.

Objective

To encourage thoughtful reactions to *The Scarlet Letter* so that most of the novel's interpretive keys will be covered.

Procedures

These activities would take several weeks to complete. If time is a factor, you might pick one, two, or possibly three of the activities to use with the class instead of attempting to use all of them.

An Introduction to Hawthorne

As an in-class reading assignment, have students read Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown," a short story that anticipates some of the themes and stylistic devices found in *The Scarlet Letter*.

When the students have finished reading, lead a discussion touching on these points: dreams vs. reality; hypocrisy of religious people; transformation of good characters into evil ones via a journey through a dark forest; a moralistic ending, seemingly "tacked on" by Hawthorne; the presence of Faith's pink ribbons (which may later be compared to Hester's scarlet "A"); and the Puritan sensibility in pre-colonial America. If time is a factor, you may wish to select a few of these topics instead of trying to discuss all of them.

Introduction to *The Scarlet Letter*

Present the next activity after about half of the novel has been read. Divide the class into two groups. Provide each group with a list of paraphrases or direct quotations from critics of *The Scarlet Letter*.

Each group then chooses the remarks of one critic and decides either to defend or to refute the remark, using evidence from the novel to support its stance. (The groups' stances will be presented orally, but you should choose the exact format of the presentations.)

Examples of remarks made by critics and where to find them:

"The story, indeed, is in a secondary degree that of Hester Prynne; she becomes, really, after the first scene, an accessory figure." Henry James, *Hawthorne* (New York, 1880)

"In *The Scarlet Letter,* the abstract, the idea, is often of greater interest than its concrete expression." F. O. Matthiessen, *American Renaissance* (Oxford University Press, 1941)

"The careful reader of Hawthorne cannot help being aware of the author's acute consciousness of the horror of loneliness. This is perhaps more apparent in *The Scarlet Letter* than in his other works, and it constitutes a somber motif in the story." Leland Schubert, *Hawthorne, the Artist* (Chapel Hill, 1944)

"*The Scarlet Letter* suggests that Hawthorne's vision of death was a good deal stronger and more constant than his vision of life." Hyatt H. Waggoner, *Hawthorne: A Critical Study* (Cambridge: 1955)

Exploring the Dramatic Qualities of the Novel

This activity requires group work for several class sessions, although you can adapt it to fit your time constraints.

Divide students into small groups. Each group chooses one climactic scene from the novel and writes a brief script for a "chamber theatre" performance. Possible scenes that students might choose to write and act out include:

1. The encounter between Hester, Pearl, and the Governor, in which Hester defends her right to keep Pearl.
2. When Chillingworth and Dimmesdale talk over herbs from the graveyard and the importance of secrets.
3. The scene in which Hester tries to persuade Chillingworth to leave Dimmesdale alone.

Developing Subjective Responses

Students write their emotional, subjective responses to a significant passage which you choose from the novel (for example, the scene in which Hester and Dimmesdale are reconciled in the forest).

- Restate, in your own words, what is going on in this passage. Did the exchange between Dimmesdale and Hester remind you of anything in your own experience (such as similar characters in a movie or another piece of literature, or someone in your neighborhood)? Describe the emotions you felt as you read through this passage.

Type each student's response onto ditto masters (or use a photocopier) and distribute copies to the class for a discussion.

Responses to Particular Passages

Concentrate on a specific passage from the novel. Students pick the most important word or phrase from the passage, and explain why they made that particular choice. If students, for instance, were asked to focus on the conclusion of *The Scarlet Letter,* they should decide which word or phrase was the most important. In doing so, they show whether they think the novel ends hopefully or hopelessly.

Persona

- Reread parts of the novel and reexamine a character's personality as revealed by actions, vocabulary, and attitudes.
- Select one scene in which the character appears, and rewrite the dialogue so that the character's role, personality, or *persona* is changed appropriately and consistently. For example, you might keep the same time, but make Hester more forward when she meets Dimmesdale in the forest.

The Scarlet Letter

A Structured Analysis of Sin

Brief Description

Presents an essay assignment for Nathaniel Hawthorne's *The Scarlet Letter*.

Objectives

To help students draw conclusions and discover new insights about the novel.

Procedures

Remind the class that Nathaniel Hawthorne was very concerned about the effects of sin on the lives of characters in *The Scarlet Letter*. These effects are revealed in the scaffold scenes, which take place in chapters 1-3, chapter 12, and chapters 21-24.

- Write an essay that begins with an introductory paragraph about the effects of sin, and includes one paragraph about each of the following characters or group: Hester Prynne, Arthur Dimmesdale, Roger Chillingworth, Pearl, and the Puritan community.
- In each of these paragraphs about the characters, describe each character's or group's sin(s), the effect of this character's or group's sins on others, and the effect of other people's sins on the character or group which the paragraph concerns.
- In the last paragraph of the essay, explain what Hawthorne perceived to be the worst sin, and why this sin was so much worse than other sins.

Source

ED 255 923

Swanson, Marti. "Writing in the American Novel Class: My Debt to Clarence." In Matthews, Dorothy (Ed.), *Writing Assignments Based on Literary Works*, pp. 2-7. *Illinois English Bulletin*, 72 (3), Spring 1985.

A Separate Peace

An Analysis of Archetypes

Source

ED 277 019

Quirk, Doris. "The Application of Archetypal Criticism to John Knowles' *A Separate Peace*." In Chew, Charles (Ed.) and others, *Reader Response in the Classroom*, pp. 77-81. (Liverpool, NY: New York State English Council, 1986.

Brief Description

Students reread parts of John Knowles' *A Separate Peace* to discover archetypal patterns, and write fictionalized accounts of characters in crisis situations, complete with archetypal symbols.

Objective

To come to grips with Gene's awareness of his own potential for evil and guilt during the period of parallel evil and guilt associated with World War II.

Procedures

This lesson is based on the assumption that the students have already read John Knowles' *A Separate Peace* and that they understand the novel on a literal level. The teaching strategy used in the lesson is based on the application of Northrop Frye's theory of archetypes.

Before presenting this lesson, you may find it useful to read James Ellis' analysis of the novel, "*A Separate Peace*: The Fall From Innocence" (*English Journal*, May 1964).

Associating with Symbols

On the first day, introduce the idea of archetypes by asking students to free-associate. Read these words slowly, one word at a time.

- Free-associate with the following words, writing down any ideas you have about each word as it is read: summer winter fall spring tree river

Have students then read off their lists as you write the students' ideas on the chalkboard in columns under the headings for each word. The goal is to find universal symbols for each heading, so students should discuss and consider rejecting any responses that seem to be personal or idiosyncratic.

- What similarities do you notice within each column? Why do many of your responses tend to be similar?

For example, students might note that spring is often a time of renewal: spring housecleaning, new outfits, pastel clothes, Easter, and so on.

Introducing the Archetypes

Next, explain the concept of archetypes. Literary critic Northrop Frye has defined archetypes as images, themes, motifs, or literary types that recur in the myths of people regardless of where or when they may have lived. They are not culture bound, but instead are universal symbols and images that have common meanings or that tend to elicit common responses.

Finding the Symbols

Assign students to work in groups of three or four people to search *A Separate Peace* for references to the archetypal symbols of river, tree, summer, fall, winter, spring.

This activity will take about 45 minutes of class time and may involve some homework time.

- Group 1: reread closely the early (summer) chapters, 1-4.
- Group 2: reread the fall chapters, 5 and 6.
- Group 3: reread the winter chapters, 7-13.
- Fill in the following categories for your assigned chapters: tree—river—summer—fall—winter—spring.

Analyzing the Symbols

Once students have completed their charts, record their findings on the chalkboard. The result may read something like the following:

Early Chapters	Middle Chapters
1. Summer	1. Fall
2. No rules at school	2. Fall from innocence
3. Devon river, clean	3. Naguamsett River, dirty
4. Tree is for fun	4. Finny's accident
5. War is far away	5. Gene experiences quiet
6. Innocence	6. School rules tightened

- Think about what has been recorded on the chalkboard. Try to decide how these archetypal symbols can aid your understanding of the novel.

Students will see that archetypal symbols (summer/winter, Devon River/Naguamsett River, and fall as season/fall as fall from innocence) work together to show the contrast between war and

Discuss the following list of images and ideas of archetypes, specifically applying them to the study of *A Separate Peace*:

Rivers as places of baptism and of transitional phases;

Gardens as places of innocence associated with paradise, especially the Tree of Knowledge in the Garden of Eden;

Fall as a season associated with sunset and preparations for winter and death;

Fall as a verb suggestive of the fall from innocence in the Garden of Eden, and the archetype of the initiation of the hero, wherein the hero passes from innocence to knowledge after undergoing a series of ordeals that often involve separation, transformation, and return.

peace as a backdrop for the narrator's confronting his own potential for evil.

Follow-up Writing Assignment

These writing exercises may be used as a follow-up assignment. Before the assignment you may need to give students a short talk and hold discussion on color symbolism.

- Choose from one of the following two scenarios. Imagine a backdrop of season and color that enhances the idea behind the conflict:

1. Create a character who is involved in a crisis. For example, describe a character going to college, summer camp, or senior high school for the first time.

2. Write about a person in the process of making an important decision or applying for a job.

Comments/Notes:

To Kill a Mockingbird

Evoking Reader Empathy

Brief Description

Students share legends (similar to the legend of Boo Radley in *To Kill a Mockingbird*) about mysterious characters and happenings of which they have heard; participate in a role-playing activity concerning discrimination; do group research; and view the 1962 film version of Harper Lee's novel.

Objectives

To open up *To Kill a Mockingbird* for students and to make it a rich experience for them.

Procedures

Building Background

This legend-telling activity should be done before the novel is read. It is designed to arouse student interest in the joy and excitement of a mysterious, frightening character, so that students do not think that the mystery surrounding Boo Radley is silly and insignificant when they encounter it in the novel.

Everyone sits in a circle with the lights off and the curtains drawn. Begin by telling a local legend. (An example story—"Cuba Road"— is provided in the source, involving the couple who run out of gas on the secluded country road, and the escaped convict who decapitates the young man and strings him up in a tree for his girlfriend to see.) Usually, whatever legend is told, some students will have heard it already, often with slight variations or another name. Have the students share these variations. Then ask students to discuss other legends they have heard. After the stories have been told, discuss what these legends have in common, (a mysterious character, a vulnerable victim, a close call), why we tell them, and what keeps them alive. This activity will make the students eager to read a novel that has such a legend in it.

Source

ED 250 714

Athanases, Stephen. "It's a Sin to Kill *Mockingbird*." From "Units for Specific Titles: High School," in *Literature—News That Stays News: Fresh Approaches to the Classics. Classroom Practices in Teaching English, 1984*, pp. 80-83. Prepared by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) Committee on Classroom Practices in Teaching English, 1985.

Once the role-playing is finished, discuss what the scenes had in common. Who had the power in the scene? How was it abused? What did the losers lose? How might the power holders have better used their power? Students will become more aware of discrimination and be better able to empathize with Tom Robinson and the treatment of blacks by whites in Maycomb in the 1930s.

Evoking Empathy for Those Who Face Discrimination

The second activity deals with the topic of discrimination and is designed to make students more empathetic toward Tom Robinson. Many middle-class, white students have never personally experienced discrimination. Students can role-play the following scenes where discrimination is obviously involved. The scenes are purposely exaggerated for easy illustration and comic effect.

1. Job Interview—a male employer, a male applicant, two female applicants. The employer calls in prospective employees one at a time, ending with the male. The women hold advanced degrees in the physical sciences from prestigious universities, have years of laboratory research at top-notch institutions, and come with folders full of letters of reference. The male applicant passed a P.E. class at the community college, drove a delivery truck one summer, and has only a letter from his mom crumpled in his back jeans pocket. The employer, cool to the two women, immediately talks sports to the man, slaps him on the back, and hires him.

2. Courtroom Scene—male judge, suburban housewife and mother, male teenage driver, and female teenage witness. The woman is obviously guilty of causing the collision in front of the grocery store, but the judge stereotypes the teenage driver ("So you're only sixteen, huh? Not a lot of experience behind the wheel. Were you distracted by the radio or anything?") and his witness ("You're not going steady with this driver, are you?") and sides with the woman who has age on her side ("I hope the little ones weren't hurt by this.").

3. Family Scene on Report Card Day—mom, dad, teenage girl, teenage boy. One child once again earned straight A's and the adulation of the parents, while the other, passing only P.E. with a D, is scolded, criticized, and compared unfavorably to the first. The stellar student is treated to some new clothing that night and the other is banished to dishwashing and the books.

Issues for Research Projects

The next activity has students engage in close reading—a careful examination of textual and contextual clues that help a reader make meaning—by working in research groups to better understand the issues that are listed below.

Divide students into small groups. They are to take notes on what they discover and present their findings to the class. The issues to be investigated include the following:

1. Significance of the book title
2. Themes, lessons, messages from the book
3. Boo Radley: legend and reality
4. Evidence of discrimination against blacks
5. Atticus as father and lawyer
6. Jem's maturation
7. Scout as young girl and detached narrator
8. Key events of the trial (presented through brief enactment of the trial scene rather than as traditional report)

Follow-up Activities

Finally, follow-up activities can be assigned once the novel is finished. After viewing a videotape of the 1962 film *To Kill a Mockingbird*, the following questions can be discussed:

- What are the gains and losses of this film adaptation?
- Do the film portrayals suit the characters etched by Harper Lee?
- How does the filmmaker attempt to preserve Lee's first-person narration? (Voice-over narration using Lee's actual voice, mood of music, and camera angle to dramatize the Boo Radley legend.)

The author also suggests looking at and discussing other works that deal with racial discrimination. Suggested titles include:

Faulkner's "Dry September," which depicts a similar situation but one which results in a lynching;

Tom McAfee's "This is My Living Room," found in Tom McAfee's *Whatever Isn't Glory: Short Stories* (St. Louis, MO: K. M. Gentile, 1980) and in *Points of View: An Anthology of Short Stories* (New York: New American Library, 1966);

James Baldwin's *If Beale Street Could Talk*, the first-person account of a young black woman's struggle to remain strong despite terrible odds

To Kill a Mockingbird

An Historical Approach

Source

ED 277 012

Kelley, Marjorie. "Introduction to Historical/Cultural Methods of Literary Inquiry and Instruction." In Chew, Charles (Ed.) and others, *Reader Response in the Classroom*, pp. 35-42. (Liverpool, NY: The New York State English Council, 1986.

Brief Description

Incorporates an historical/cultural multi-dimensional approach to introducing Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird* in four to six class periods. Examines the background of the text, author, and reader, using methods employed by historical/cultural literary critics.

Objectives

To help students develop interpretive and cognitive skills and achieve a richer appreciation of the novel.

Procedures

Instruct students to complete the sentence "History is _____."

Collect the definitions after a few minutes and read them aloud. Do not, however, tell students that their definitions will be shared ahead of time. At the end of this class session, give the students instructions for their second activity.

- As a homework assignment, write a 50-word (or longer) personal recollection which will be read aloud the following day during class.

If two accounts of the same event occur, read the two accounts aloud again, telling students to pay close attention. Once the accounts are read, ask the students if the readings suggest any conclusions about how historical events are recounted. Remind the students to consider their own definitions, as well as the "expert" definitions, of history as they reach their conclusions. They should also think about their own recollections and the class discussion following the reading of the recollections. The conclusions are collected at the end of class. Some of the conclusions might include the following:

1. History is looking at the past in such a way as to gather information. This information helps to generate some kind of intellectual activity.
2. No two people look at the same thing in exactly the same way.

3. The conclusions a person reaches about information gathered in an historical investigation reveals as much about the investigator as it does about the subject being investigated.

4. An historian does these things: a) gathers information from a source; b) questions this information; c) tries to resolve these questions; and d) draws conclusions based on this gathered information. Read these conclusions aloud in class the following day because, along with the previous activities, these conclusions help students realize that personal recollections contain both strengths and weaknesses. Also, present any information about Harper Lee that will aid students in their study of *To Kill a Mockingbird*. Then, read aloud the first five pages of the novel. For a homework assignment, have students write fifteen questions about the text.

Class Discussion

A class discussion of the questions generated by the students takes up the next class period. Any questions which cannot be answered by anyone in the class should be asked of history teachers and reported to the class the following day.

As a final activity, once the questions from the previous day have all been answered, give students a worksheet with three columns for comparing Scout's childhood time, her adult time, the students' own time. Items that you may want to use on the worksheet include:

- Check the true statements:
  _____The narrator's adult time is around 1960.
  _____There are many differences between life in Alabama in 1960 and life in Alabama in 1933.
  _____Life in New York State today would seem very strange to 6-year-old Scout Finch.
  List the major characteristics of life today.
  List the major characteristics of Scout's life in 1933.
  List the major characteristics of Scout's life in 1960.

After students complete the worksheet during class, discuss the results.

Ordinary People

Focusing on Student Discussion

Source

ED 306 584

Peck, David. *Novels of Initiation: A Guidebook for Teaching Literature to Adolescents.* Teachers College Press, NY, 1989. pp. 51-53.

Brief Description

Presents several ideas for discussion/writing topics on Judith Guest's *Ordinary People.* Provides suggestions for connecting this novel with other literary works.

Objectives

To examine the novel and link it with students' personal experiences.

Procedures

Discussion and Writing Ideas

- Describe Conrad ten years later.
- Have you ever had a crisis with which you felt you could not cope? What did you do? What helped?
- Jeannine says to Conrad, "You certainly don't have a very clear idea of what you do well." What does she mean? Is she right? Discuss.
- Describe Conrad's changing relationship with Calvin, Beth, or Dr. Berger. What are the main elements of the relationship? What does Conrad get/learn from it?
- What does Conrad learn in the novel about survival? What strategies does he learn to use to cope with daily life and grow stronger? What works?
- What does the novel say about family life in America? (Cite other examples besides the Jarretts.)
- What does *Ordinary People* say about the importance of friendship? (Cite at least three instances from the novel.)
- What does the novel say about feelings and the importance of expressing them? (Cite examples.)
- Compare the novel to the film version of *Ordinary People.* Is Conrad more or less sympathetic in the film? Calvin? Beth? What ideas in the novel are dropped in the film? What is added? How is the film finally different from the novel?

- Miss Mellon, Conrad's English teacher, asks him about the title character of Thomas Hardy's *Jude the Obscure*: "Do you think he was powerless in the grip of circumstances, or could he have helped himself?" The question, of course, applies to Conrad as well. Discuss.
- Conrad learns a number of important lessons from Dr. Berger—for example, that although feelings can be painful as well as joyful, the absence of emotion ("reduction of feeling") to which depression leads is worse; and that it is necessary to recognize people's limitations, including one's own. Find another value in the novel (about feelings, caring, guilt, etc.) and write a paper showing its source in the novel and its importance in your own life.

Connections to Other Novels

1. J.D. Salinger, *The Catcher in the Rye*, chapter 1. Holden Caulfield is headed for a breakdown and hospitalization.
2. John Knowles, *A Separate Peace*. This novel, set in an Eastern boarding school, deals with male bonding and competition.
3. Sylvia Plath, *The Bell Jar*, chapter 5. This novel deals intensely with a young woman's breakdown, hospitalization, and recovery.
4. Hannah Green, *I Never Promised You a Rose Garden*. This novel tells of a young woman's hospitalization and eventual recovery from a mental breakdown.
5. Paul Zindel, *The Pigman*. Two young people learn about the responsibilities of caring for someone else.
6. Robert Cormier, *The Chocolate War*, chapter 3. Compare the situations of Conrad and Jerry Renault.
7. John Neufeld, *Lisa, Bright and Dark*. The novel deals with adolescents in psychological crisis.

General Strategies for Teaching the Novel

Dear Abby

An Inventive Study of Character

Brief Description

Role-playing as a main character from a book they've read, students write letters to Ann Landers or Dear Abby expressing a problem encountered by that character, and then write responses to letters their classmates have written.

Source

ED 236 607

Gallo, Donald R. "Writing From Literature." In *Exercise Exchange*, 27 (1), Fall 1982, pp. 32-34.

Objectives

To write *from* literature instead of only *about* literature. To provide a creative approach to writing with an academically respectable topic written for a specific audience.

Procedures

This activity can be used in conjunction with the study of a single assigned book, or as an alternative to the traditional book report on outside reading.

- Pick a book you've read.
- Pick a key character from that book. (Examples: Patty Bergen from *Summer of My German Soldier*; John or Lorraine from *The Pigman*; Holden Caulfield from *The Catcher in the Rye*; Sophie from *Sophie's Choice*; Biff from *Death of a Salesman)*
- Identify a major problem that your character has. (Examples: Lorraine's feeling that her mother picks on her; Sophie's concern about Nathan's rages and his callous treatment of her; Biff's inability to express his feelings to his father)
- Write a letter that your character might write about that problem to Ann Landers or Dear Abby.

When the writing is finished, place all the letters in a pile and scramble them.

- Select a letter from the pile, making sure it's not about the same problem you wrote about. (A different character, when possible, is also preferable.)
- Pretending that you are Ann or Abby, write a response to the problem expressed in the letter.

Novels with Gender Issues

Considering Sexual Stereotypes

Source

ED 172 226

Klein, Thomas. "A Sexual Values Week." In Crowley, Sharon (Ed.), *Speech and Drama in the English Class*, pp. 69-70. *Arizona English Bulletin*, 20 (3), April 1978.

Brief Description

Presents exercises about sexual roles and topics, to be used before teaching works of literature which deal with sexual themes, such as *The Scarlet Letter* or *The Catcher in the Rye*.

Objectives

These introductory exercises make students more comfortable and less judgmental in their encounters with the sexual themes in the novels they read.

Procedures

The following exercises take about four hours to complete. In addition to introducing *The Scarlet Letter* and *The Catcher in the Rye*, these exercises can also be used with *Rubyfruit Jungle, Lady Chatterly's Lover,* and *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest*.

Exercise 1

This exercise, in which students describe what they dislike about the opposite sex, may take anywhere from thirty to fifty minutes. Divide the class into two groups—one male, the other female.

- In your group, share what you dislike about the other sex.

If students need help getting started, suggest a complaint for each group, such as:

1. Males are usually not sensitive to feelings.
2. Females often cry and sometimes even use their tears to manipulate others (especially males).

Once each group has had sufficient time to complain and discuss, have the males seat themselves in a row along one side of the room, with the females seated in a row along the opposite side of the room, facing the males.

Next, beginning with either group, ask each member to state one dislike about the opposite sex. The other group gets the same chance, once the first group is finished. If a discussion between the two groups begins, let it continue, but make sure that there is enough time for each person to voice a dislike. Once each student has had a

chance to speak, discuss sex stereotypes and what social conditioning can do to people in terms of sexual roles.

If any class time remains, have each group get together again and present a brief dramatization of a situation that has been described or discussed. Then as a class, analyze what was presented in the dramatization.

Exercise 2

This exercise determines how closely students resemble society's sexual stereotypes. The purpose of this exercise is for students to realize that they all share these human characteristics in varying degrees and that behaving only in the manner of sexual role stereotypes set by society can be restrictive. List a set of adjectives (see sidebar) on the chalkboard or overhead projector.

- For each adjective, rate yourself on a scale from 1-7, where 1 is low or not an adjective which describes yourself very well, and 7 is high or would be a very appropriate adjective to describe yourself.
- Add up your scores for the odd-numbered answers and then for even-numbered answers.

Odd-numbered adjectives are generally considered masculine, and even-numbered adjectives are usually considered feminine by society. If the class is confident or mature enough, the range of scores can be listed on the chalkboard and discussed.

- Ought society to label characteristics as "masculine" or "feminine?" Are females who exhibit many "masculine" characteristics (or males who exhibit many "feminine" characteristics) wrong, deviant, homosexuals? Are they confused or are they more developed in their interests than their peers?

1. self-reliant
2. yielding
3. definate in beliefs
4. cheerful
5. independent
6. dependent
7. athletic
8. shy
9. assertive
10. affectionate
11. decisive
12. loyal
13. forceful
14. sympathetic
15. aggressive
16. sensitive
17. dominant
18. compassionate
19. analytic
20. tender

Exercise 3: Alligator River

Draw the following names on the chalkboard or on a transparency for an overhead projector: David, Bill, Alligators, Abigail, Gregory, and Carter.

Tell the class the following story:

> Abigail loves David and the two of them plan to get married. The only way Abigail can think of to cross the river is to take a boat. Carter is the only one who has a boat, but when Abigail asks him if she can use his boat, Carter tells her she must sleep with him before he will let her use it. When Abigail asks Bill, her father, for advice, he says she should do whatever she thinks best. So, Abigail sleeps with Carter and

then is able to get to David. But once she tells David what she had to do in order to get to him, he rejects her. Abigail eventually tells Gregory about what has happened, and he falls in love with her and beats David up.

- Rank the five characters by how much you respect each character, starting with the one you most respect and finishing with the one you least respect. Write down the reasons for the ranking you chose.

Discuss students' choices and why they made the choices they did in terms of the attitudes that motivated their decisions. Explore whether their attitudes are their own, or if they tend to be the same as their parents' attitudes.

Now switch the sexes of all of the characters—Abigail is now Arthur, David becomes Delila, and so on—and tell the story again.

- Rank these five characters in order of respect once more and discuss the results of this change. Discuss whether or not what Arthur did was more acceptable to you than what Abigail did, and whether the female version of Carter acted improperly for her gender. Was there a double standard involved in your response to this second version of the story?

At least three issues are raised by this third exercise: the ways in which parents can be most helpful to their children; whether or not sexual intercourse in such a situation is immoral; and whether or not the means justify the ends.

Two Journalistic Approaches

Alternatives to the Book Report

Brief Description

Presents two alternatives to the typical book report.

Procedures

Newspaper Approach:

- Headline the main idea of the novel.
- Imagine that you are a reporter and report on your novel as a record-breaking headline story. Use a newspaper style for your write-up as you describe the characters' actions.
- Include the following:
  Main ideas
  Descriptive language (to hold the reader's interest)
  Specific, important details (facts)
- You may try to influence the reader's opinion by the use of:
  "It would seem..."
  "There is a possibility..."
- You may not report an opinion as a fact.
- Facts must be documented (verified) in the novel.

T.V. or Radio Newscaster

- Dramatically headline (in caption form) the main idea of the novel. You may use a visual aid.
- You are a T.V. news commentator reporting this exciting event as a fast-paced, record-breaking news story. Include characters' names and actions in your report. Remember, you are working against a time limit.
- A news commentator will use:
  Repetition (to sell the main idea)
  Colorful, descriptive language (to catch and hold the listeners' interest)
- You may try to influence the viewer's opinion by means of the following phrases:
  "It appears to this reporter that..."
  "A strong possibility is indicated..."
  "One might assume..."

Source
ED 266 484
Sandweiss, Kay. "Creative Book Reporting." In Neier, Sue (Ed.), *Novels and Adolescent Fiction*, p. 13. *The Idea Factory*, Winter-Spring 1985.

- Remember, you may not report opinion as fact.
- All facts must be verified (documented) in the novel.
- You may opt to be a radio reporter and newscaster, rather than a T.V. newscaster. Follow the same format, but remember that you will only be heard, rather than both seen and heard.

Comments/Notes:

Writing Assignments

Writing from Literature

Brief Description

Presents several activities to be carried out in conjunction with the study of a single assigned book, or to take the place of the traditional book report. Each topic can be modified to "fit" different pieces of literature or to accommodate students of greater or lesser sophistication.

Objectives

To have students write *from* literature instead of only *about* literature.

Procedures

Assign or have students choose from the following writing activities:

1. A newspaper account of events from the book. (Examples: a sports report of Alfred's big fight in *The Contender*; a society column about a big party in *The Great Gatsby*; a feature story on the rodeo exploits of Thomas Black Bull in *When the Legends Die*)

2. A letter from one character to another. (Examples: from Holden to his brother to describe his adventure in New York City from *Catcher in the Rye*; from Slim to George two years after the ending of *Of Mice and Men*)

3. A script for the Evening News—either radio or television—about an incident from the book. (Examples: the discovery of the hiding place in the Secret Annex in *Anne Frank*; the death of Adam's father and mother in *I Am the Cheese*; the assassination of Caesar in *Julius Caesar)*

4. An entry in *Who's Who* for a main character. (Examples: Shane from *Shane*; Atticus Finch from *To Kill a Mockingbird*; Zhivago from *Doctor Zhivago*)

5. A letter of recommendation for a character—for a job, "Person of the Year," or some award. (Examples: recommending Brother Leon in *The Chocolate War* for a new teaching position; for one of the doctors in *Hiroshima*; for Beth in *Ordinary People*)

Source
ED 236 607
Gallo, Donald R. "Writing From Literature." In *In Exercise Exchange*, 27 (1), Fall 1982, pp. 32-34.

6. A eulogy for a character. (Examples: the father in *Sounder*; Kizzy in *Roots*; Paul Baumer in *All Quiet on the Western Front*)

7. A citation from the mayor or a civic group to praise a character's actions. (Examples: for Ben's heroism in *Deathwatch*; for Sidney Carlton's sacrifice in *A Tale of Two Cities*)

8. An obituary for a character. (Examples: for Haven Peck in *A Day No Pigs Would Die*; for Willy Loman in *Death of a Salesman*)

9. A plea to a television audience, explaining the character's motive for acting in a certain way. (Examples: Raskolnikov in *Crime and Punishment*; Miro in *After the First Death*; Tess in *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*)

10. A newspaper editorial about an issue (or theme) in the book. (Examples: teenage violence in *The Outsiders*; the practice of weaseling dogs in *A Day No Pigs Would Die*; censorship in *Fahrenheit 451*)

11. A personal letter to a character in the story. (Examples: to Holden in *Catcher in the Rye* explaining how you feel about your parents in comparison to his feelings about his; to Nurse Ratched in *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* about her treatment of the inmates)

12. A questionnaire administered to the public about an issue from the book. (Examples: the mistreatment of dogs in *Call of the Wild*; test-tube babies in *Brave New World*). Report on the findings.

13. A dialogue between two characters, either from the same novel or from different ones. (Examples: a discussion between John and his mother in *The Pigman*; an accidental meeting outside a bar between Jake Gatsby from *The Great Gatsby* and Willy Loman from *Death of a Salesman*)

14. An interview with a character, with you as interviewer or with someone else as interviewer. (Examples: you interview Charlie in *Flowers for Algernon*; Gloria Steinem interviews Hester Prynne from *The Scarlet Letter*)

15. A psychiatrist's report. (Examples: on Tony in *Then Again, Maybe I Won't*; on Katsuk in *Soul Catcher*; on Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness*)

Using Poetry and Song

Inventive Introductions to Novels

Brief Description

Describes several ideas to introduce a novel to adolescents, using popular songs, poetry, and various alternative activities.

Objectives

To engage students' involvement with popular songs such as "I'll Be Watching You" by the Police and "Total Eclipse of the Heart" by Bonnie Tyler, which are not only familiar and interesting to the students but also contain a title, refrain, or lyrics that deal with themes from various novels.

Procedures

Play the song, and lead a friendly competition in which students identify the song's title, performers, album name, and refrain. Once the students' interest is thus aroused, lead the discussion into ideas that the song has in common with the novel, thus introducing the novel itself.

Introduce a novel through poetry. Poets whose works lend themselves to this approach include Langston Hughes (particularly "Dreams"), Robert Frost, Shel Silverstein, Nikki Giovanni, and William Shakespeare. Although different poems can be used to introduce more than one work of literature, using poems as an introduction to more than one work eliminates the novelty of the activity. The poems not only serve to introduce a novel but also help students gain an appreciation for poetry. Poems express meaning and ideas compactly, while they help set the tone or mood for the novel.

Set up a "special interest corner." In this corner place a simulated newspaper headline or an article touching on a controversial issue that will be encountered in the novel. Then, with several previously selected students, role-play the concept of a roving reporter in a "You Are There!" vignette. Students are likely to be drawn into a discussion of a theme or topic in the novel and you can direct this interest toward the novel itself.

Source:
ED 266 484
Sandweiss, Kay. "Novel Ideas For Teaching The Novel." In Neier, Sue (Ed.), *Novels & Adolescent Fiction*, pp. 18-19. The Idea Factory, Winter-Spring 1985.

Aspects of the Novel

Examining Literary Devices

Source

ED 036 526

LeSueur, Virginia T. *The Discovery Route to Values, Via Literature: "To Kill a Mockingbird" and the Importance of Individuals*. Part of a master's thesis by Virginia LeSueur, "'Valuing,' Literature and the Teacher of Secondary English," Allegheny College, Meadville, Pennsylvania, 1968. pp. 2-3 in Appendix B.

Brief Description

Presents a set of questions that can be used with any novel, and that deals with the novel's type, title, beginning, point of view, plot, characters, setting, mood, style, theme, and value.

Procedure

Use a selection of the following questions to lead a discussion on the novel your class is studying.

Type

- Is the novel romantic or realistic?

Title

- Does the title satisfy the requirements of brevity, originality, appeal?
- What is its significance?

Beginning

- Does the novel begin with description, narration, conversation, or exposition?
- What does the beginning of the novel accomplish?
- Do you think the beginning could be improved? If so, how?

Point of View

- Is the story told in the same person throughout? If not, can you see why not?
- Is the story written in the first person? If so, is the narrator a character in the plot or merely an observer? Can you see why?
- Is the story written in the third person? If so, is it written objectively (relating only what might have been seen) or by an omniscient observer (who knows all and even sees into the characters' minds)? Is the reason for this evident?
- Do you feel that the point(s) of view chosen are the most effective possible? Why or why not?

Plot

- Do you admire the author's selection of incidents? Does each contribute? If so, what?
- What is the order of the incidents? (Sequential? Flashbacks?) Can you see why?
- What is the climax or turning point of the plot? Is the falling action rapid or slow?
- Is the struggle moral, physical, mental, or a combination of these?
- Point out some minor crises; point out why there are crises which are not the climax of the book.
- Is there more than one plot? If so, how are the plots joined?

Characters

- Are they real people, idealized people, or caricatured people? Support your interpretation.
- Are they credible and consistent? Support.
- How do you get acquainted with them? (Direct or indirect characterization?)
- Who is the hero?
- Which are the subordinate characters? Are they static or kinetic?
- Why have they been included? (Humor? Philosophy? Information? Local color? Realism?)
- Is character the most important element of the story?

Setting and Mood

- What is the story's setting in place? Its setting in time?
- Is setting essential to the story? (Has it an irreplaceable influence on plot or character?)
- Cite examples of setting as revealed by one or more of the following: description, occupations, dress, speech, historical scenes, places, people, customs.
- Is the book in any way a study of environment?
- Has the book a distinctive atmosphere or mood? If so, can you tell how it is evoked?
- Is setting the most important element of the story?

Style

- What is there about the way the author writes (style) that you might be able to recognize in the future? Quality and/or kind of description? Many words or as few as possible? Explicit or implicit? Effective use of nouns and verbs? Impressive vocabulary?

- Does the style resemble or contrast with that of another author you know? If so, with whom?
- Is the book humorous? If so, what kind of humor? (Exaggerated? Quaint? Sly? Whimsical? Absurd? Ironical? Sympathetic? Coarse? Subtle?)
- Does the author arouse the reader's emotions? (Which emotions—pity, fear, terror, compassion, awe, resentment, anger?) What emotion does the author handle best?
- Does the author use figurative language to any degree? If so, does it contribute to the writing? Give an example or two.
- Do you feel that the author has ever been sentimental in this story? Hackneyed? Trite? Sordid? Support, and state how this contributes or weakens.
- Does the author use irony? Symbolism?
- Wherein do you think the chief strength of the author's style lies?

Theme

- Has the book any significance apart from its value as a story?
- What do you feel was the author's purpose? (To entertain? To reveal character? To reveal the author's point of view about some aspect of life? To illustrate a theory? To exemplify moral principles? To effect reform? To indulge the fancy or imagination of the author? To present a historical picture? To stress local color? To suggest or to solve a problem? A combination of purposes?)
- State the theme of the book.

Value

- Has the book value for you? If so, what kind? (Escape? Relaxation? Reinforcement of belief? Teaching value? Ethical value?)

Readers' Theater

Dramatizing Literature in the Classroom

Brief Description

Describes an oral approach (based on the Living Literature or Readers' Theater method) to a piece of literature—poem, short story, or novel—in which students work in groups to give oral presentations of literary works.

Source

ED 172 226

Silberschlag, Joan Steen. "Living Literature—An Oral Approach to Literature." In Crowley, Sharon (Ed.), *Speech and Drama in the English Class*, pp. 24-28. *Arizona English Bulletin*, *20* (3), April 1978.

Objectives

To vitalize the study of literature and have students see the printed page come to life; to provide opportunities for creative thinking, reading skills practice, training for oral and body expression, development of confidence, poise, and fostering a sense of teamwork towards a shared goal.

Procedures

The following lesson may be used with short stories, poems, or with one or more chapters of a novel.

Forming Groups and Assigning Parts

Divide the class into groups of five students. Assign each group a short story (or one or more chapters in a novel).

- Your group is responsible for presenting and teaching your assigned story to the class. During class periods, read the story aloud and assign parts. Assign the narrative parts to your strongest readers so that they can set the pace of the presentation. Group members who would rather not have large reading parts may, in addition to reading a minor part, be responsible for sound effects, music, and visual aids, such as slides or other scene-setting pictures. Every group member must read a part and contribute to the production.

Compiling and Analyzing the Script

The story adaptation should be done during class time so that you can give guidance and encouragement when needed.

- Once your group has read the work and assigned parts, compile the script. Stay true to the text—no deletions, insertions, changes, or paraphrasing. However, you may omit

the "she said" or "he responded" if you wish, so that the dialogue and reading will flow smoothly.

- Compile the script as a group—make sure that one student in the group does not do the script compilation or story adaptation alone. Your presentation should be as simple in style as possible. Type or neatly write your scripts and place them in dark folders (so they do not distract the audience) or small notebooks.

If the students are allowed to write in their textbooks (or novels), they may use the textbook itself instead.

Twenty Questions for Understanding Literature

For the next exercise, use the twenty questions about the situations, structure, language, and summation of the text found in K. B. Valentine's *Interlocking Pieces, Twenty Questions for Understanding Literature*. These questions and their answers may later be turned in as a group or individually as a written assignment.

- Once your group has adapted the story, begin a specific analysis of the *persona* (speaker) and his/her dramatic situation (who is speaking, to whom, where, when, and why).

When the script compilation is completed, set up a rehearsal schedule for the groups. Groups rehearse both during and outside of class. Choose an area of the classroom to use as a stage, making sure that it can be easily viewed by the entire audience.

- You may use props for your presentation, such as chairs, stools, benches, and ladders. The characters can enter and exit the stage and may wear simple costumes to enhance the presentation. You may also play taped music which is appropriate to the story. Staging elements need not be complicated and should highlight, rather than detract from, the primary purpose of the literature.

The groups are given a set amount of time on assigned days in class to present their piece of literature (a short story usually takes twenty to thirty minutes).

- Use a portion of your designated class period to present the elements of plot, characterization, setting, mood, tone, and style of your story and to explain the following literary terms as they apply to the story: exposition, initial incident, rising action, climax, and denouement. These discussions of elements and literary terms may be done either before or after the actual oral presentation, and the audience will

participate by answering and asking questions during the discussion.

Options for Follow-up Activities

The following additional activities can be used with very ambitious classes.

Videotape the presentation or a portion of it and play it back for a discussion of television and film terms, such as long shot, close-up, pan, etc.

Collaborate with other teachers to produce programs with common themes (such as death, love, family) or of certain genres (such as mythology or science fiction). Play recordings such as *Don Juan in Hell*, *John Brown's Body*, or *The Hollow Crown*. Follow up these recordings and the students' oral presentations with tests designed to promote close, sensitive listening. You could also attend workshops and summer institutes which deal with Readers' Theater.

- Produce a multi-media presentation using media such as painting, music, mime, video, etc.
- Write commercials for your presentation. One approach can be based on the period or the subject matter or on locating a sponsor who would promote this type of story.
- Present the literature in such a way that the mood or meaning is different from what is normally associated with the work.
- Present a parody of the story.
- Produce a radio show of the presentation.

In addition to the performance of the literature, students can also turn in written assignments. Each student can submit answers to the twenty questions mentioned earlier (this may be done as a group), an analysis of one of the characters in their story (not necessarily the character whom the student portrayed), a story summary, and answers to questions that are either found in the text or asked by the teacher. Thus, the students have analyzed their stories three times: once for the oral presentation, again for the discussion, and a third time for the written work.

Results/Benefits

The oral approach contributes to better reading comprehension, helps develop better voices and articulation, and makes the study of literature a meaningful, exciting experience for students because they are in direct contact with the literature. Students begin to think creatively and strengthen their imaginations. They read orally in such a way that self-confidence and poise are developed and they improve the ability to listen.

Reader-Response Activities

Engaging Students with the Novel

Source

ED 277 019

Hansbury, Patricia. "Reader Response: Theory and Practice." In Chew, Charles (Ed) and others, *Reader Response in the Classroom*, (Liverpool, NY: The New York State English Council, 1986). pp. 4-14.

Brief Description

Presents four classroom techniques for students—keeping a response journal, determining literary importance, focusing on the reading process, and raising questions.

Objectives

To encourage students to ask questions about a literary text, the author's choices, and the characters in the work; to make literature classes more response-centered and meaningful for students.

Procedures

These techniques do not apply specifically to one novel or the novel in general; rather, they can be used for any piece of literature, including the novel.

Keeping a Response Journal

Have students write their responses to literature in a journal. Depending upon the students, the text, and the purpose of the lesson, the journal entries may be strictly structured or open-ended.

To introduce the idea of writing responses to literature, read aloud from the work of literature, stopping after every few paragraphs or wherever appropriate. When you quit reading, have students record their reactions to the passage they have just heard. They may respond with a summary, prediction, comment, question, or an association. Then have the students share what they wrote.

Response journals should be used throughout the rest of the unit. Sometimes give students specific questions to answer when they reach a particular point in the novel. Have students experience the reading by eliciting a personal response from them or asking them to predict the outcome of the story. At other times, have students stop at a particular point in their reading and ask them to respond on their own.

Another alternative is to let students respond whenever they want. These response journals serve several purposes. They make students more aware of the text as an experience, rather than as something to be consumed as a way to get to the ending. Journal entries serve as a

source of discussion, and may be expanded and elaborated on for an essay assignment.

Determining Literary Importance

This technique is suggested by David Bleich in *Readings and Feelings* (Urbana, Illinois: National Council of Teachers, 1975).

- Find the most important word, sentence, passage or aspect of the literary work. Support your choice.

This technique is effective because discussion opens up quickly and is of high quality, since students must read the work carefully and understand it in order to answer the question. Also, because there can be more than one correct answer, students who are sure they have the "right answer" are amazed at the variety of answers, and an interesting discussion may ensue. At the same time, students who rarely come up with the "right answer" in other circumstances may gain confidence as they defend their choices.

Focusing on the Reading Process

The following two ideas raise students' awareness of a literary work so that they are more capable of responding to it.

1. Give students original and rewritten versions of a literary work (such as the two versions of D. H. Lawrence's poem "Piano"). Have students evaluate both versions.

2. Ask students to supply missing words, sentences, or paragraphs in a text, and to give reasons for their choices.

Posing Questions

Have students write down questions that occur to them as they read the literary work. Then, use these student questions to begin discussion of the work. You may wish to hold off on telling students about the author and background of the work until students ask for this information so that they will be interested and ready to listen.

Critically Reading the Romance Novel

Source

Christian-Smith, Linda K. "Practical Reflections: Girls' Romance Novel Reading and What To Do about It," *The New Advocate*, 1 (3), pp. 177-185, Summer 1988.

Brief Description

Recommends reader-response strategies to encourage students who read "romance novels" to approach the romances more thoughtfully and critically.

Objectives

To encourage young readers who read romances to sort out the meaning of their lives as young people and to predict what their futures as adults might be. To develop more sensitive, critical readers who examine the presentation and stereotyping of the characters, and who analyze and even challenge the characters' behavior.

Procedures

The following strategies are organized in relation to reader-response theory. The strategies proposed are, however, closely related and could be combined in a variety of ways. To foster picturing and imaging when reading romance novels, ask students to stop after reading the first few pages of a new book.

- Log or map the kinds of things that are going through your mind. For example, start an informal record (writing and pictorial representations) of ideas that the reading generates.
- Before beginning reading, examine the book's cover, artwork, title, etc., and write what you anticipate the book to be about. Then read to check how accurate your anticipations and predictions were.
- Identify gender problems that characters in the romance have to solve. Again, make predictions and read to correct or verify your predictions.

Instruct students to stop reading at particular points throughout the novel.

- Ask yourself questions about the event just described. Why is it important? How does it change your understanding of the book's events and characters?

- Reformulate, on the basis of the event described, the message that the book presents, and plumb any feelings that the segment has provoked.

The following responses can be verbal or in writing:

- Keep a journal, and diagram or represent in some other visual way, your impression of the characters or events in a book. Imagine and describe a dream that a character could have, and speculate about its meaning; or pretend to be a character and retell in the character's own words what has happened.
- In a shoe box, collect items that might belong to a character. Examine the contents of the shoe box and retell the story through its content.
- Form small groups and consider the question: why do authors write romances?
- Examine the way that male characters are portrayed in romances. Explore the stereotypes that surround masculinity in the romance novel.

Copy "telling episodes" from romance novels and give them to students with questions that target reasons for characters' thoughts and actions. What would they do in a similar situation?

Keep abreast of new novels for young readers in which the theme, central action, and major focus is something other than (or at least goes beyond) romantic involvement. Recommended journals include: *School Library Journal*, *Journal of Reading*, *English Journal*, and *Alan Review*. (The author of this lesson plan also lists several romance novels which go beyond limited presentations of femininity and stereotyped sex roles.

Recommended Books

The following novels can be used to foster examination of more realistic gender portrayals and other predominating themes:

1. Cleaver, B. and Cleaver, E. *Trial Valley*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1977.
2. Carrigue, S. *Between Friends*. Scarsdale: Bradbury, 1978.
3. Kingston, M. *Woman Warrior*. New York: Random House, 1977.
4. Levoy, M. *Alan and Naomi*. New York: Harper, 1977.
5. Mazer, N. F. *Up in Seth's Room*. New York: Dell, 1979.
6. Pascal, F. *My First Love and Other Disasters*. New York: Viking, 1979.
7. Paterson, K. *Bridge to Terabithia*. New York: Avon, 1978.
8. Quin-Harkin, J. *California Girl*. New York: Bantam, 1981.

Annotated Bibliography of Related Resources in the ERIC Database

Documents cited in this section provide additional ideas and activities for teaching the novel to junior high and high school students. The bibliography also includes resources for designing a literature curriculum, as well as for developing individual lesson plans.

The ED numbers for sources included in *Resources in Education* are included to enable you to go directly to microfiche collections, or to order from the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). If a citation has a CS number rather than an ED number, look in *RIE* or the ERIC database to find the corresponding ED number. The citations to journals are from the *Current Index to Journals in Education*, and can be acquired most economically from library collections or through interlibrary loans.

Alfonso, Regina. "Modules for Teaching about Young People's Literature—Module 1: Gender Roles,' *Journal of Reading*, v30 n2 p160-63 Nov 1986.

Outlines a genre study program, useful for undergraduate or graduate classes in children's literature as well as adaptation for use with learners in grades 6 through 9. Enumerates questions and reading assignments pertaining to changing gender roles. Contains an annotated (by level and genre) bibliography.

Dominianni, Robert. "Ray Bradbury's 2021: A Year with Current Value," *English Journal*, v73 n7 p49-51 Nov 1984.

Describes how Bradbury's work can be used in the classroom. Indicates how attitudes towards technology can be found in the work and how these may be used to stimulate mature students.

Ellis, W. Geiger, ed. Focused issue on Adolescent Literature. *The ALAN Review*, v10 n3 Spr 1983. 25p. ED 228 655]

The articles in this journal issue focus on adolescent literature. The issue also contains a review of media materials for use in teaching adolescent literature, brief reviews of new books, and the abstract of a dissertation that surveyed the status of the young adult novel in the secondary school English classroom.

Fleming, Margaret, ed. "Reading, Writing and Adolescents," *Arizona English Bulletin*, v25 n2 Mar 1983. 118p. [ED 274 993]

Noting that most junior high level curricula do not take into account students' rapid mental and physical changes, the articles in

this focused journal issue recommend works and teaching strategies that harmonize with these student needs.

Gallo, Don. "What Should Teachers Know about YA Lit for 2004?" *English* Journal, v73 n7 p31-34 Nov 1984.

The author describes what future teachers should know about the quality, opinions of, developmental stages in adolescent literature, and discusses the variety, use, and availability of adolescent literature in the years to come.

Goodwin, Pearl. "Elements of Utopias in Young Adult Literature," *English* Journal, v74 n6 p66-69 Oct 1985.

Finds that utopias act as catalysts to young people exploring issues of personal growth through reading. Discusses several books that contain utopian elements.

Handbook for Planning an Effective Literature Program, Kindergarten through Grade Twelve. California State Dept. of Education, P.O. Box 271, Sacramento, CA 95802-0271, 1987. ($3.00, plus sales tax for California residents) 73p. [ED 288 194; paper copy not available from EDRS]

Intended for teachers, administrators, consultants, parents, and students who wish to review and improve elementary and secondary educational programs, this handbook provides essays discussing educational research, teaching philosophies and methods, instructional materials, and curriculum planning strategies in relation to the teaching of literature.

Johnson, Walter H. "A Stepping Stone to Melville," *English Journal,* v73 n4 p69 Apr 1984.

States that reading Scott O'Dell's popular juvenile book, "The Island of the Blue Dolphins," can increase high school students' comprehension and appreciation of Herman Melville's "The Encantadas," as both works are fictional treatments of the same historic event.

Karolides, Nicholas J., ed. Focused Issue on "Strategy and Focus: Teaching Literature," *Wisconsin English Journal,* v25 n3 Apr 1983. 28p. [ED 278 994; paper copy not available from EDRS]

The six articles in this focused journal issue are concerned with literature teaching on the secondary and college level.

Kennedy, Michael. "Creating Classroom Plays from Adolescent Novels," *English Journal,* v76 n5 p63-65 Sep 1987.

Describes a classroom program in which students adapted and then produced a play based on the adolescent novel "The Chocolate War." Notes group improvisation strategies for adapting internal monologue to dialogue. Argues the advantages of such a project over class discussion and book reports.

"Literature, Literary Response, and the Teaching of Literature: Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations Published in *Dissertation Abstracts International,* July through December 1984 (Vol. 45 Nos. 1 through 6)." ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Urbana, IL, 1984. 13p. [ED 250 707]

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 24 titles deal with a variety of topics, including: (1) the effects of junior great books programs on students' thinking and reading skills; (2) adolescent novels and the ideology of femininity; (3) furthering high school students' moral and ego growth through the study of English literature; and (4) the rhetorical approach to teaching poetry.

"Literature, Literary Response, and the Teaching of Literature: Abstracts of Doctoral Dissertations Published in *Dissertation Abstracts International*, July through December 1983 (Vol. 44 Nos. 1 through 6)." ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communication Skills, Urbana, IL, 1983. 15p. [ED 238 013]

This collection of abstracts is part of a continuing series providing information on recent doctoral dissertations. The 29 titles deal with a variety of topics, including the following: (1) Chicano adolescent literature; (2) interpersonal cognitive complexity as related to the character perceptions, literary response preferences, story comprehension, and literary attitudes of adolescent readers; and (3) characterization of the Anglo-American male in realistic and adolescent fiction.

Matthews, Dorothy, ed. Focused issue on "The English Teacher and the Arts," *Illinois English Bulletin*, v71 n2 Win 1984. Illinois Association of Teachers of English, Executive Secretary, English Department, 608 South Wright St., Urbana, IL 61801. ($3.00) 55p. [ED 239 298; paper copy not available from EDRS]

Emphasizing an aesthetic approach to language arts, this focused journal issue brings together ideas for literature and writing instruction that capitalize upon opportunities provided by all the fine arts. The eight articles discuss: (1) the connection between art and English; (2) students and cultural enrichment; (3) art and the ancient epics; (4) painting and the art of rhetoric; (5) educational drama to enhance listening skills; (6) studying the film "Citizen Kane"; (7) the frame-story device; and (8) 150 adolescent novels worth reading.

Matthews, Dorothy, ed. Focused issue on "On Contemporary Literature: Critiques, Reviews and Recommendations." *Illinois English Bulletin*, v72 n2 Win 1985. Illinois Association of Teachers of English, 100 English Building, 608 South Wright St., Urbana, IL 61801. ($3.00, single copy; $10.00, yearly subscription) 66p. [ED 252 860; paper copy not available from EDRS]

The articles in this focused issue draw attention to works of contemporary literature with classroom potential. Four articles suggest new approaches for the reading and teaching of such established writers as Robert Frost; Kurt Vonnegut, Jr.; Eudora Welty; and Saul Bellow. Two other articles examine the bestsellers "Ordinary People" and "The Color Purple."

Matthews, Dorothy, ed. Focused issue on "Popular Literature: Its Compatibility with the Basics," *Illinois English Bulletin*, v70 n2 Win 1983. Illinois Association of Teachers of English, 100 English Building, 608 South Wright St., Urbana, IL 61801.

($3.00, single copy; $10.00, yearly subscription) 53p. [ED 225 148; paper copy not available from EDRS]

This special journal issue contains nine articles on the subject of using popular literature in the classroom. Subjects covered in the articles include: (1) teaching Agatha Christie's "Curtain"; (2) pairing the classics with detective fiction; (3) using fantasy literature with students afraid of great literature; and (4) using adolescent fiction to teach values clarification. A concluding article discusses ways to cope with censorship.

McLeod, Alan M., ed. Focused issue on "Achieving Peace and Literature for Students," *Virginia English Bulletin*, v35 n2 Win 1985. 109p. [ED 264 573]

The articles in this journal issue (1) discuss involving students in various language arts activities that have peace as a theme; and (2) deal with literature for students from kindergarten through grade 12. Topics include peace education in the English classroom, the peaceful hero, capturing student's responses to literature through journals, and narrative structure as a tool for discovering theme.

McLeod, Alan M., ed. Focused issue on "Books Still Worth Reading," *Virginia English Bulletin*, v33 n1 Spr 1983. 51p. [ED 228 656]

The 10 major articles in this special journal issue deal with literary works designated by individual educators as "still worth reading." The works discussed include "The Assistant" by B. Malamud; The Old Man and the Sea by E. Hemingway; Emma by J. Austen; Lord Jim by J. Conrad; The Scarlet Letter by N. Hawthorne; and "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" by S. Coleridge. Additional articles discuss literature as period study, black literary classics, choosing books for young adults, literature that teaches about reading, and the reading preferences of adults and adolescents.

McLeod, Alan M., ed. Focused issue on "Literature and Its Teaching," *Virginia English Bulletin*, v34 n2 Win 1984. 68p. [ED 251 832]

The 15 major articles in this themed issue focus on "Literature and Its Teaching." The journal also contains suggestions for teaching Great Expectations, Treasure Island, Flowers for Algernon, I Am the Cheese, Walden, and Sounder.

Moore, David W.; and others. "Understanding Characters' Reactions to Death," *Journal of Reading*, v26 n6 p540-44 Mar 1983.

Suggests a structured response format for interpreting literary characters in death-related literature using Kubler-Ross's five stages of confronting death.

Nugent, Susan; Nugent, Harold. "Young Adult Literature: From Middle School to College." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the New England Association of Teachers of English Fall Conference, 1984. 13p. [ED 251 855]

Learning difficult literary concepts (such as point of view, symbolism, or internal monologue) while reading difficult and often unfamiliar content prematurely places too many demands upon middle school and high school students. Young adult literature allows students to address the demands of a new concept while reading more familiar

content. One specific technique found beneficial when teaching new concepts is the double entry journal, which requires students to write affective responses to readings and to compare such entries with classmates. Because adolescent literature works are relatively short, they can be used to introduce students to the experiences of various minorities, to life in historical periods, and to different genres of adult literature.

"Open to Suggestion: Traveling through Children's Literature," *Journal of Reading*, v31 n1 p70-73 Oct 1987.

Presents a method to interest students in high school literature by starting with children's books. The technique involves teacher modeling, using illustrations to motivate writing, and linking a children's book with a more advanced work on a similar topic.

Rochman, Hazel. "Young Adult Books," *Horn Book Magazine*, v62 n6 p760-63 Nov-Dec 1986.

Applies the idea of the theme booktalk to Wuthering Heights, which serves as a springboard for talking about themes of family rage, confrontation, quarrel, and rebellion in other works of literature with relevance to contemporary young people.

Sheidy, Marian. "YA Books in the Classroom: From Odyssey to Dickens to Salinger to Zindel," ALAN Review, v15 n3 p24, 43-44 Spr 1988.

Suggests teaching Paul Zindel's Harry and Hortense at Hormone High in conjunction with Charles Dickens' Great Expectations to ninth graders and Homer's Odyssey, and teaching Harry and Hortense in conjunction with Catcher in the Rye to seniors. Provides discussion questions for Harry and Hortense.

Stahl Gemake, Josephine; Wielan, O. Paul. "A Study Guide for Building Moral Reasoning through Adolescent Literature," *Journal of Reading*, v28 n1 p34-39 Oct 1984.

Outlines criteria for selecting books for a unit on moral thinking and presents a generic study of questions and activities to accompany a wide variety of appropriate books.